THE ROLE OF THE COUNSELLOR TRAINER: 
THE TRAINER PERSPECTIVE

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This research sets out to explore how counsellor trainers understand and experience their role in the context of early twenty-first century Britain. The training sector is facing significant pressures connected with the shifting context for counselling and changes within the educational sector itself. These are occurring against a wider backdrop of economic recession and a lack of published research into rank-and-file trainer experiences and viewpoints.

The methodology of choice is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), a qualitative approach which focuses on the production of rich individual accounts of subjective experience. Sixteen trainers were recruited from across Great Britain via purposeful convenience sampling using the professional networks of the researcher, herself a trainer. The trainers were individually interviewed using a semi-structured interview schedule. The result is four separate but interconnected studies of the experiencing and understanding of the role on the part of trainers within programmes based on person-centred, integrative, psychodynamic and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) approaches. The four studies are analysed separately and contextualised within the literature. Tentative overall themes are then drawn out and implications discussed.

The findings highlight the multifaceted and demanding nature of the training role. A commonality and difference in understanding of the role is evident across the studies. Discernible differences focus primarily on the relational nature of the role and the centrality accorded to critical thinking and the evidence-base. There are also different levels of identification and reconciliation expressed in relation to professionalising processes.

A dominant finding in terms of the experience of the role is its high-reward and high-stress nature. Across all four studies, there is an identifiable vulnerability to substantial levels of stress and a developed potential for burnout. Workload pressures, the emotional demands of the role, a limited sense of autonomy and a perceived lack of appropriate support are among some of the major factors cited. In parallel trainers report a high level of reward and vocational commitment. The experience of the role’s rewards and challenges is a dynamic one, the balance shifting in the longer or shorter term. The context of the work carries significance with trainers in the private sector reporting substantially less stress. On a wider note, the shifting professional, educational and economic contexts are perceived as adding a new note of threat and uncertainty and leading some trainers to question their vocational commitment. The continuing divisions amongst differing theoretical schools are evident as well as a continued sense of non-belonging within institutional contexts.

The findings are not presented as generalisable truths but as a contribution to the development of a case-based context-dependent understanding, regarded as important to effective practitioner development.
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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I examine the ways that counsellor trainers have understood and experienced their role within the context of early twenty-first century Britain. The interviews with trainers that form the heart of this study took place between 2008 and 2010 in the midst of a turbulent time for counselling (e.g. Cooper, 2011; Gabriel, 2011). A drive for evidence-based practice, the proposed implementation of a statutory or state regulatory system, the launching of the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (I.A.P.T.) initiative within the National Health Service (N.H.S.) - all of these developments contributed to the turbulence and formed the immediate backdrop for this research project.

It also sits within a personal context. This is a piece of ‘insider’ research; I am a counsellor trainer. As I have researched others’ experience, I have been researching my own. As I have attempted to make sense of others’ experience, I have been attempting to make sense of my own. It started from the experience of my turbulent times. Devereaux (1967) argues that all psychological research holds an unconscious meaning for the researcher. Although, by definition, I cannot know the motivations that remain unconscious, I have some consciously-held ones. It was my perception of the complex and demanding nature of the trainer role that led to the inception of this research. In many ways this is a personal practice-orientated piece of research: I was interested in research that would help inform, support and promote my practice. My intention is, however, that this study will help inform, support and promote the practice of others, as well as raise the profile of trainers’ voices within on-going debate and development in the area.

This study is informed by a central understanding - that of the situatedness of human existence. We are, in Heidegger’s (2002/1927) terms, ‘beings-in-the-world’. Our existence and hence our understanding is historically and culturally situated (Gadamer, 2004/1960), making it apt to begin with a sketch of the historical and cultural contexts for this study. As Nietzsche (1989/1886) commented, there is a point in every philosophy when the philosopher’s conviction appears on stage. My situatedness within all aspects of the research process leads me to prioritise from the start a personal transparency, a placing of
myself on the stage. A level of articulated personal reflexivity forms not only a part of this starting-point but one that I shall return to throughout. I also avoid the use of the third person in this thesis – *I* am undertaking this research, in conjunction with others.

1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTER

In this introduction I provide a broad sweep of the developments which contextualise but also justify the study. The first sweep is personal as I turn the torchlight on myself as originator, key participant and author of this research study. Further sweeps highlight the development of counselling, counsellor training and the training role within Great Britain in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, as well as the immediate economic and political contexts. In tracing these broad sweeps, I wish to avoid constructing a ‘progress narrative’ - “one of the ‘grand narratives’ of western culture: the long struggle to ultimate victory” (Gergen, 1992, p.25). A related trap is determinism, the notion that there is a direct, traceable, causal link between past and present events - event A \( \Rightarrow \) event B \( \Rightarrow \) event C. What such stances miss is the hermeneutic nature of the construction of history. ‘Our past undergoes continuous reassessment and reinterpretation’ (Spinelli, 1989, p.102). Although inevitably written from a contemporary perspective, I try to at least avoid the conscious application of ideas of inferiority, superiority and causality to historical developments. Finally, I turn to an exposition of the research question and methodological approach adopted, the key terms used and an overview of the chosen structure for the thesis.
1.2 THE PERSONAL

1.2.1 The starting-point: The ‘wounded trainer’

‘Really, really difficult week. Tired, overstretched, ending up distressed.
As I e-mailed a colleague – I think my resilience just ran out.
Working too hard, really difficult group process –
challenging group – feeling vulnerable and scared.
Aware of my body – tight chest, wobbly legs, shallow breathing.’
Journal extract, 21 March 2010

Rowan (1981) speaks of the research process as emanating from a problem in being. The starting point for this research project was a problem in my being as a trainer. I had started to feel worn down by the role; I was feeling wounded. I had been engaged with strong dynamics within student groups that had touched me powerfully and painfully. I had been challenged by the undertaking of the professional gatekeeper aspect of the role, i.e. the tutor as assessor ‘making judgments about the trainees’ suitability to graduate or practice’ (Thomas, 1998b, p.105). My overwhelming sense was of the role’s difficulty. The following diagram was used by me in a 2008 presentation in which I sought to represent my analysis of the network of responsibilities at play within the role. Note my emphasis on power, accountability and responsibility, and the centrality of the trainer in the training vortex. I was feeling burdened.
Such experiencing had provided the impetus for an earlier small-scale research project undertaken by my colleague, George Brooks, and myself. This took the form of a one-off focus group with eight trainers from across the public and private sectors and from courses with differing theoretical underpinnings. The focus was the exploration of the challenges faced by trainers in their work. Three areas dominated discussion: the lack of achieved consensus over training’s desirable nature and direction; the difficulties in undertaking the professional gatekeeper aspect of the role within institutional contexts; uncertainty and anxiety concerning state regulation (Ballinger and Brooks, 2007; Ballinger, 2008a). Alongside this, trainers articulated a significant level of commitment to the role. This experience felt reparative. I heard others articulating their sense of difficulty. I also heard their commitment, which helped me – I had temporarily lost the sense of my own. This experience directly informed the nature of this research project.
1.2.2 The history of my engagement with training

I have been involved in the field of counselling training, on both a part-time and full-time basis, on certificate, diploma and masters level programmes within Further Education and Higher Education settings since 1993. I have been the course director of a masters programme during a process of enforced closure. I have worked in both ‘old’ and ‘new’ universities (i.e. former polytechnics). I have assumed a range of responsibilities in the delivery and management of programmes. I have worked on courses based on a core model (person-centred) and an integrative foundation. I have acted as an external examiner across a range of programmes delivered in the private and public sector within England, Scotland and Northern Ireland. I also have some international experience. I have, for instance, acted over the last few years as academic adviser for counselling training programmes delivered in Kenya.

1.2.3 My experience and approach as a counsellor

My training as a counsellor was in the person-centred approach and the person-centred core conditions of empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard (Rogers, 1957) remain at the centre of my counselling approach and have strongly influenced my approach to research. A substantial amount of my counselling experience was built up within a large inner-city further education college, a service that I went on to manage for a number of years. In my practice I was struck by the social and economic basis of much of my clients’ distress (Ballinger, 2010). Such impressions were consolidated for me by subsequent work within women’s centres. Partly as a consequence, understandings from both feminism and existentialism became incorporated into my work and, as with person-centredness, now strongly influence my worldview. As might be apparent from such comments, I have some reservations about the counselling project: I do not see it as the answer to human distress. I held an undecided stance towards regulation and hold an ambivalent one towards the continuing professionalisation of counselling activity. Overall, I would depict myself as somewhat of a sceptical insider. My continued involvement is the product of my existential ‘vote’ for the importance of kindness in human relating.
1.2.4 My lecturing experience

Prior to retraining as a counsellor, I worked as a history lecturer; indeed, my first degree is in economic and social history. One legacy of this is my belief, echoed in this introduction, in the relevance of an understanding of history to an understanding of the current world. Another related legacy is my critical stance towards the progress narrative. As McLeod (2003, p.11) comments with reference to research, issues regarded as ‘at the cutting edge….are often to be discovered as hot issues at some point in the past’. A third legacy, one reinforced by my experiences in counselling, is my belief in the importance of social, economic and political factors in dictating individual lifestyle and life chances.

1.2.5 My social/personal characteristics

I am a white, middle-aged woman from a working-class background. In many ways the first three descriptors pick me out as a ‘typical’ therapist, whether identified as counsellor or psychotherapist. 84% of the B.A.C.P. membership is female (Dalziel, 2009). A survey of United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP) membership found an average age of 51 years and a 97% white and 69% female membership. Reflecting my profile, 95% of responding members had a career prior to counselling, the main category being teaching (Tantam, 2006). A similar overall picture emerges of my typicality in terms of training. A 2000 survey of B.A.C.P. accredited courses found that three-quarters of trainers were ‘mature’ (41-60 years of age) and 71% were female (Hill, 2002). It is harder to gauge the ‘typicality’ of the fourth descriptor as social class has been a neglected area within counselling (Ballinger and Wright, 2007; Balmforth, 2008; Ballinger, 2010).

I suffer from what Jung called ‘the urban neurosis of atheism’. I share the ‘modern desire not to be deceived’ (Rieff, 1987, p.13). I have something of the outsider, the critical observer within me. I have ‘scepticaemia’ (Chalmers, 2012) about many things. These are some of the attitudes or stances that I have brought to this research project.
1.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRITISH COUNSELLING SECTOR

The voluntary sector and higher education were key early sites for the emergence of the modern British counselling sector in the mid-twentieth century. Foundational developments were the setting up of The National Marriage Guidance Council (now Relate) in 1938, the establishment of the first student counselling service at University College, Leicester in 1948, and CRUSE’s creation in 1959. McLeod (2009) points to the importance of the educational system and the voluntary sector in shaping its particular character. Dryden et al (2000) concur, pointing to the significance of a particular and peculiarly British nexus of voluntarism, spiritual and educational responses to distress. Bondi (2004, 2005) also places significant emphasis on the importance of voluntarism and the voluntary tradition in defining its early character. Reflecting the British voluntary tradition, it was a highly feminised activity, connected with notions of middle-class philanthropy or the ‘lady bountiful’ tradition. She viewed counselling’s development as at least in part as a challenge to the more medicalised and professionalised model of psychotherapy. This had emerged from within the confines of psychiatry in the nineteenth century and gone on to gain a level of acceptance and influence which encouraged counselling’s establishment and growth. McLeod (2009) argues that in many ways counselling can be seen as an extension of psychotherapy, ‘or even a means of ‘marketing’ psychotherapy to new groups of consumers’ (p.38).

From these early strongholds in the voluntary and educational sectors, counselling went on to expand across a range of sectors, public, private and voluntary. Factors said to have stimulated its development include: the decline of public belief in the efficacy of political action (Halmos, 1965); the secularism, hedonism and optimism of the 1960s to the early 1980s (Pilgrim, 1991; Feltham, 2007); the increasing fragmentation of society (McLeod, 2009); the influence of counselling initiatives in America (e.g., Feltham, 2006); the seminal work of Carl Rogers in the 1940s (McLeod, 2009). The general rise of a therapeutic culture (e.g. Rieff, 1987; Richards, 2007) can be argued to have both stimulated and reflected its development. Economic growth and the rise of welfare capitalism were key to its expansion within the public sector (Pilgrim, 1990). Counselling can also be seen
as benefiting from the opportunities opened up by a wider deprofessionalisation process within the public sector implemented by the ‘new right’ from 1979 onwards (Abbott and Wallace, 1998; Demailly and de la Broise, 2009). Opportunities opened up for counsellors to gain footholds, for instance, in the mental health field.

1.3.1 Its contemporary character

Diversity now characterises the British counselling sector. The differing divisions of B.A.C.P. offer an indication of this diversity: Faculty of Healthcare Counsellors and Psychotherapists; B.A.C.P. Workplace; Association for Independent Practitioners; Association for University and College Counselling; Association for Pastoral and Spiritual Care and Counselling; Counselling Children and Young People. Health has become an area of growing significance. From the 1990s counselling was increasingly becoming defined as a healthcare profession (Hansen, 2007). Counsellors were working in about half of all GP practices by the early twenty-first century (Mellor-Clark, 2000).

Flowing from this diversity of setting are differences in the role that counsellors now undertake. As Pilgrim (1990, p.12) argues: ‘the role and legitimacy of psychotherapy is altered according to where it is physically sited’. There is also a variety of underpinning theoretical models, the number increasing as theories arose to reflect differing and shifting social and cultural climates (McLeod, 2009). A figure of over four hundred is commonly cited (Karasu, 1986). As Pilgrim (2009) notes, most therapeutic models were developed on the basis of an outpatient private practice and he argues that the variety of settings within which therapy now operates has led to significant challenges for such models. Moreover, the lack of a shared paradigm is problematic for the training endeavour (Hollanders and McLeod, 1999). It also encourages internal division, described by Clarkson (1998) in pejorative terms as ‘schoolism’.

A further characteristic is that of an increased professionalisation of counselling activity. Bondi (2005) has argued that professionalisation processes were evident by the fourth quarter of the twentieth century in three main ways: the development
of systems of voluntary self-regulation involving the bulk of practitioners; the academicisation of training programmes either through the external validation of training programmes by universities or their wholesale transfer into higher education settings; the institutionalisation of the specific occupation of counsellor within the paid workforce. Davies (2009) speaks of three waves of professionalisation, the first characterised by the setting up of training institutes, the second by the establishment of accrediting bodies, and the third by the latest proposal for state regulation. The British Association for Counselling (B.A.C.) was established in 1977 and developed accreditation procedures for individuals, organisations and courses. Renamed as the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy or B.A.C.P. in 2000, it explicitly associates itself with professionalism, describing itself as the ‘largest professional body representing counselling and psychotherapy in the UK’ (B.A.C.P., 2011). There continues, however, debate within the counselling community about the process’s completeness and desirability and this forms one of the backdrops for this study.

1.3.2 Current challenges

The turn of the new century brought fresh challenges for the counselling sector. One was economic. Counselling has been buffeted by forces that have swept through the public and private sector with current and future employment threatened as individuals, employers and government look to reduce spending. An accompaniment has been an increased demand for evidence-based practice, a movement gaining momentum in the public sector from the late twentieth century. Audit-driven calls for accountability have become the hallmark of an ‘evidence-saturated world of healthcare delivery and increasingly an evidence-saturated “everything” world’ (Cheek, 2011, p.696). As discussed further in section 1.2.3.2.1, primacy is granted to the findings of quantitative rather than qualitative research, to the evidence of systematic reviews and, in particular, to evidence generated from randomised control trials or RCTs (e.g. Cape and Parry, 2000; McLeod, 2011). Such outcome research has largely been focussed on brief structured CBT treatments, in part because they lend themselves more effectively to such research processes. This has contributed to CBT’s success in gaining a
strong evidence-based profile (Cooper, 2008). Another highly relevant development has been the Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (I.A.P.T.) initiative, which has significantly impacted on employment opportunities for counsellors within the N.H.S. The third development has been the attempted imposition of a statutory or state regulation system. While it appears that state regulation is no longer on the horizon, the other challenges remain current and arguably have been supplemented by new ones stemming from the failure of counselling to gain recognition via the regulatory process. Here is one therapist’s view of the situation:

‘... it seems to me that the crisis is not impending but already well under way. I suspect former practitioners might share this view, and managers of services who have lost their jobs in the NHS and NHS-funded voluntary services. And by the experienced therapists working in both NHS and non-NHS settings who feel obliged to undertake formal training in CBT to enhance their employment prospects’ (McInnes, 2011, p.38).

1.3.2.1 The call for evidence-based practice

The late twentieth century witnessed a drive for efficiency and cost-effectiveness across a range of funding agencies based upon the principle of ‘evidence-based practice’. N.I.C.E. (the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence) was set up in 1999 and from 2005 its recommendations, based on perceived clinical and cost-effectiveness, formed the legally-enforced basis for the adoption of treatments within the health service. Its decisions indicate a ‘hierarchy’ in the weight attached to differing types of evidence, with randomised controlled studies seen as the ‘gold standard’ (Cooper, 2008).

This development has contributed to a drive to generate research within the field and, in particular, research that validates the effectiveness of the differing counselling approaches (McLeod, 2009). While wider reviews of research demonstrate an overall parity in the effectiveness of the differing approaches (Cooper, 2008), cognitive behavioural approaches (widely collected under the umbrella term of cognitive behavioural therapy or CBT) have constructed a
substantial, and substantially successful, research profile. Cognitive behavioural psychotherapy (CBP) is an alternative term used. Gibbard and Hanley (2008, p.215) describe CBT as ‘the recommended treatment for all primary mental health conditions’. One result has been the growth of CBT’s influence and status. A corollary is a threat to the status of other approaches whose evidence base does not reflect the N.I.C.E. hierarchy.

1.3.2.2 The I.A.P.T. initiative

The principles underpinning the I.A.P.T. initiative are to be found within the Depression Report, commonly known as the Layard Report (Layard et al, 2006). It recommended the setting up of a nationwide publicly-funded system of psychological therapeutic support for sufferers from depression and anxiety. In 2008 it was announced that £173 million was to be invested in the establishment of services and training and supervision of staff to support the rolling-out of the programme on a national scale. The government recently announced an extra £22 million in funding for the children’s and young people’s I.A.P.T. programme (Hawkins, 2012).

Two major explanations can be forwarded for the negative responses to these proposals in segments of the counselling field - the dominance of CBT in the proposed service and the planned involvement of other occupational groups in its delivery. The 2006 Layard report recommended that 10,000 new therapists be trained primarily to deliver cognitive behavioural therapy. Half of these would be clinical psychologists who would head up the system; half would be drawn from the ranks of social workers, nurses, counsellors and occupational therapists who would be given part-time training over one or two years to become “psychological therapists”. Although there has been subsequent widening of the service to embrace the potential for offering, for instance, counselling based on a humanistic approach to people with depression (IAPT, 2010), the service offered can be viewed as highly manualised and tightly circumscribed. Strawbridge and Woolfe (2010, p.16) equate such moves with the ‘McDonaldisation’ of therapy, whereby ‘complexity is minimized, process routinized and thinking and human contact reduced’. Equally, such moves could be viewed as a process of
deprofessionalisation, this time with counsellors as victims rather than beneficiaries.

1.3.2.3 The drive to regulation

The state has generally shown little interest in the compulsory registration and regulation of the psychological therapies (China, 2008). However periodic concerns for public safety, for example, fears in the 1970s over the activities of the Church of Scientology, had stimulated governmental initiative in the area. Medical scandals, in particular the so-called ‘Shipman’ affair, caused a broader regulatory programme to be rolled out within education and health in the later stages of the twentieth century (China, 2008; Litten, 2008; Parker and Revelli, 2008). The proposed regulation of counselling sat within this broader regulatory initiative. What some within the field perceived as a threat to the very essence of counselling was removed in 2011 with the change of government policy away from statutory regulation towards enhanced voluntary registers. The government announced its intention to establish the Council for Healthcare Regulatory Excellence (C.H.R.E.) as the national accrediting body for health professionals not currently regulated by statute (B.A.C.P., 2011). The CHRE, renamed as the Professional Standards Authority for Health and Social Care (P.S.A.) in 2012, is currently developing a scheme for the accreditation of voluntary registers to be launched in late 2012 (Jackson, 2012; Bilton, 2012).

1.4 THE DEVELOPMENT OF COUNSELLOR TRAINING

Formal counselling training in Britain began with the award-bearing courses at the universities of Reading and Keele in the mid-1960s. In parallel, voluntary counselling organisations started to set up their own training programmes, and gradually these began to influence the development of provision across the whole sector. For instance, the Marriage Guidance Council developed its own training procedures and (now known as Relate) continues to be a major force in the counselling training field to this day. Provision grew steadily from the 1960s
onwards and it is now delivered across the voluntary, private and public sectors at introductory, certificate, diploma, masters level and beyond. The 2009 B.A.C.P. training directory listed courses at over 350 universities, further education colleges and specialist training providers. Reflecting the theoretical diversity of counselling, courses are offered with a wide range of theoretical bases.

It is now generally accepted that three years part-time training to diploma level is a requirement for employment as a counsellor. McLeod (2009) points to a current broad consensus regarding the required elements of an effective training programme. These are: acquiring theoretical frameworks; developing counselling skills; work on self; learning to deal with professional issues; using research to inform practice.

Notions of a core curriculum and core standards have underpinned regulatory initiatives via professional organisations. In 1985 B.A.C. (as it then was) set up a ‘Working Group on the Recognition of Counsellor Training Courses’ and its course recognition scheme was launched in 1988. Such notions also underpinned the latest attempt to introduce state regulation, placing training at the centre of attention and concern. One response on the part of B.A.C.P. was the development of a new core curriculum which formed the basis for the 2009 course accreditation scheme, commonly known as the ‘Gold Book’.

The current challenges faced by training can be argued to mirror those faced by counselling. As with counselling, training has been hit by economic forces and political decision-making. The public sector, including Higher and Further Education institutions, has been under economic and political pressure since the 1980s and has been argued to have taken on many of the features of the private sector (Meerabeau, 1998). The 1980s marked the start of a new period of financial austerity and greater external control of university activity. While the number of students doubled between 1980 and 2000, the unit of funding per student fell by 40%. Between 1980 and 1997, the student-staff ratio increased by almost 100% (Gombrich, 2000). Pressures on the sector increased substantially as we entered the twenty-first century. Universities now face cuts of up to 70% of their state
funding (Loewenthal, 2010). Funding for arts courses is being removed with concomitant rising fee levels. I discuss such developments more fully in chapter 2.

When combined with pressures on recruitment stemming from economic recession, the vulnerability of counselling courses has become increasingly evident. Although recruiting to target each year and proving economically viable, the university-based diploma and masters programme I worked on at Nottingham Trent University was closed down in 2005. The training provision at the University of Durham was closed in 2006. A high-profile recent victim was counselling training at Sheffield Hallam University, closed down in 2010.

1.5 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNSELLOR TRAINER ROLE

In the earliest days of counsellor training, trainers tended to be drawn from a range of occupational backgrounds. These included medicine, social work, psychology, nursing, education and theology (Mahler, 1995). While this reflected counselling’s novelty, it also reflected the range of potential influences on counselling practice as well as the limited perception of counselling as a specialised activity. As the sector matured, so did the presence of the ‘specialised’ counselling practitioner-trainer (Thorne and Dryden, 1991). It was from such a cohort that the B.A.C. Working Group on the Recognition of Counsellor Training was drawn in 1985 and, perhaps not surprisingly, the practitioner-trainer model became incorporated into the ensuing course recognition or accreditation scheme. This continues to the present day.

Trainers work across a range of settings, on part-time and full-time bases, and on casual and permanent footings. There are no standard entry requirements; these are largely dependent on the policies and practices of the institutional settings within which trainers are employed. Thus far, there has not developed a widespread network of training for trainers. ‘Counsellor trainers often have to teach themselves’ (Connor, 1994 p.13). Interestingly, given the pivotal role played by trainers in ensuring quality standards and, arguably, the increasing challenges
inherent in providing training for a changing and expanding sector, a B.A.C.P. accreditation scheme for trainers was closed to new applicants in 2002 and the use of the title 'B.A.C.P. accredited trainer' withdrawn from February 2010. Interesting counter-examples are C.O.S.C.A., Scotland’s counselling and psychotherapy professional body, and the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (B.A.B.C.P.), both of which currently maintain trainer accreditation schemes.

1.6 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

It is within these wider contexts that my research question is positioned: How do British counsellor trainers understand and experience their role?

This is a study of the experiences and perceptions of counsellor trainers at a particular point in time within a particular economic, social, cultural, geographical and political context. I would apply the traveller metaphor to my approach to this research.

‘The interviewer-traveler wanders through the landscape and enters into conversations with the people he or she encounters. The traveler explores the many domains of the country, as unknown terrain or with maps, roaming freely around the territory.’ (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.48)

The traveller’s tale is the ‘interpretation of the narrative he or she brings back to home audiences’ (ibid, p.48-49). This fits with my sense of knowledge as localised, contextualised and co-constructed. My approach of choice is Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis, henceforth referred to by its common nomenclature ‘I.P.A.’ (Smith et al, 2009) and explored more fully in chapter three. As I shall explore, my choice was influenced by the approach’s traveller overtones. It embraces my interpretative role as researcher as well as the interpretative activities of those I meet. It embraces the heuristic in that it ‘incorporates creative self-processes and self-discoveries’ (Moustakas, 1994,
Importantly it focuses on the phenomenon ‘as experienced’: this subjective experience has been the focus of my interest as long as I can remember and was one that spurred my entry into counselling.

1.7 KEY TERMS USED

Counselling
This thesis is concerned with one area of usage of the term, counselling as an activity of a ‘personal, emotional and psychological kind’ (Feltham, 1995, p.5). It focuses on counselling as an organised activity taking place within a range of settings, both on a paid or voluntary basis. In this thesis I embrace a wide-ranging, broad definition of counselling that includes rather than excludes different understandings. I adopt, therefore, the broad ‘user-centred’ definition proposed by McLeod (2009).

‘Counselling is a purposeful, private conversation arising from the intention of one person to reflect on and resolve a problem in living, and the willingness of another person to assist in that endeavour.’ (p.6)

Psychotherapy
The distinction between counselling and psychotherapy is a contested one and different traditions have arisen with reference to the usage of the term. One approach is to emphasise difference and notions of inferiority/superiority can accompany such differentiation (Feltham, 1995). Another approach is to emphasise commonality. I, for instance, was trained within a person-centred milieu, where a lack of distinction was drawn between counselling and psychotherapeutic activity.

I have decided on a pragmatic stance. I will differentiate between counselling and psychotherapy where I deem it necessary for clarity of analysis or where sources have clearly differentiated between the two. Where sources use the terms interchangeably, I will use the term therapy as an umbrella descriptor.
Counsellor training
I will use this term here to describe programmes specifically designed to provide the core training, usually at Diploma level, widely regarded nowadays as necessary preparation for working as a counsellor within Great Britain. I will also use the term ‘counselling training’, a descriptor used interchangeably with ‘counsellor training’ in the British counselling world. I also at times will use the term ‘counsellor education’, another descriptor applied within the field.

Counsellor trainer
Following my convention above, I will adopt a relatively narrow definition for the purposes of this study, using the term to describe people whose major role is the provision of core training at diploma and/or masters level to participants intending to become counsellors. Again, I will also use the widely adopted phrases ‘counselling trainer’ and ‘tutor’.

Professionalisation
I use the term professionalisation, hopefully in a non-contentious way, to describe the movement of an occupational group towards becoming a profession. Although the term ‘counselling profession’ is commonly used in the literature and amongst counsellors themselves (including McLeod op. cit.), it can be argued that counselling’s status as a fully-fledged profession is neither universally accepted nor desired.

I will, where possible, consciously avoid using the term ‘counselling profession’ to describe counselling in its current state. However, at times there is an absence of a suitable alternative, reflecting the ‘driving out’ of other terms from the dominant narrative. In referring to the literature, the distinction feels easier to maintain: I consciously apply a distinction in its usage where the literature does so. In the findings, I stay with the participants’ usage of the term. The term profession is more easily attached to training, reflecting its associations with other occupational activities more readily accorded professional status (e.g. university lecturing). While the full professional status of the trainer remains contestable, I will adopt the more general habit of talking of the training profession.
Statutory or state regulation
The two terms are used interchangeably although a distinction has been drawn. Statutory regulation was understood as leading to public recognition of the psychological therapies as distinct professions on a par with medicine and the law, while keeping regulatory processes in the hands of the professional bodies themselves (China, 2008). Even though the term statutory regulation is applied, the proposals that contextualised this study were of a different order, and could be understood as state regulation. The White Paper ‘Trust, Assurance and Safety – The Regulation of Health Professionals in the 21st Century (February, 2007) made it clear that registration and associated disciplinary powers would be vested in an existing public body, the Health Professions Council (H.P.C.). As discussed previously, the proposed state regulation of counselling was abandoned in favour of enhanced voluntary registration in 2011. As with other use of terminology, in discussion I continue my practical approach of using the term state regulation as a general descriptor but utilising the term statutory regulation where applied in sources.

1.8 STRUCTURE AND PRESENTATION

The structure of the thesis will follow conventional norms. Following the broad contextualisation contained within the introduction, Chapter two provides a more immediate review of the related literature. Chapter three explores methodology and Chapter four the methods used. Chapter five is devoted to an initial analysis of the findings. Chapter six attempts a more wide-ranging and overarching contextualisation and discussion of the findings. Chapter seven critiques the study, explores my involvement in the research process and concludes.

I try, within the accepted norms, to make my mode of communication accessible and engaging. I use, albeit in a limited manner, imagery and metaphor within this thesis, reflecting the trainers’ allusions to poetic and visual imagery in their accounts. This thesis also reflects my training style, in that I try and apply some coherent order to ideas and developments, to combine complexity of content with simplicity of delivery. I ‘smooth’ the narrative (West and Hanley, 2006).
Another motive has only recently become clear to me. My writing is an on-going process of meaning-making in which I am simultaneously author and audience. As Speedy (2004, p.30) says: ‘the acts of writing and reading perform the story differently and both reader and writer are taken to a different place’. The order in the finished account reflects the order that my learning processes require as well as mirroring the way I try to communicate meanings to students.
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 CHAPTER OVERVIEW

Hart (1998) argues the literature review to be of fundamental importance in a number of ways. It serves to help researcher and reader gain an understanding of the topic, a familiarity with the work already undertaken within the area, alongside knowledge of how it has been researched and the key issues identified. Its core objective is the construction of a ‘clear and balanced picture of current leading concepts, theories and data relevant to the topic’ (ibid, p.173). The scale of the task is substantial. As McLeod (2003, p.11) argues: ‘No matter how original a new research question or technique might appear to be, it can only be asked or constructed on the back of all [my emphasis] the questions or techniques that have gone before it’. Hart talks of the need to demonstrate familiarity with all relevant documents, published and unpublished. Moreover, a review should analyse and synthesise, not simply collect and categorise. It should provide an effective rationale for the study in terms of the originality of its contribution, the appropriateness of its adopted approach and the methods applied.

Such bold statements seem difficult to refute. On one level, however, I would argue that meeting such demands constitutes an impossible task. A project to review all of the preceding questions or techniques is beyond the scope of this thesis. Moreover, how do I identify them? Am I not inevitably drawn into constructing a deterministic A ⇒B ⇒C progress narrative? I take comfort from Hart’s (1998) statement of the unattainability of the perfect review, of its inevitable partiality. A literature review is written from a particular standpoint and perspective and for a particular reader. McLeod’s dictum to explore all ‘relevant’ material is telling. Relevance is based on subjective judgment – the responsibility to select cannot be avoided. While aiming to ‘orient the reader to the field of study’ (Heath, 2006, p.5), I would therefore like to acknowledge the choices I have made in constructing this orientation.
Contrary to a growing orthodoxy of starting from wider contextualising material, I have chosen to present the review by commencing with the literature most directly framing the research question, i.e. understandings of the trainer role that have emanated from within the counselling training field. Here I shift my metaphor to one of Russian dolls used by Johns (1998) to describe the contexts of training:

‘Each individual trainee and trainer exists within the specific course, within teaching and learning methodologies, within the training context, within the funding system, within the developments of the wider counselling world, within the political and social culture of the time, and within transpersonal belief systems.’ (p.4)

I concur with her analysis and this has guided the nature of the literature review. To utilise her metaphor of Russian dolls I have constructed this review starting with the innermost doll and adding the contextual layers within which she/he nestles:

I am aware of having made conscious choices in terms of the dolls I have chosen and the boundaries of my explorations. A review of historical developments in teaching and learning theory may be pertinent but lies beyond the scope of this study. Roots of current pedagogic understanding have been traced as far back as 500BCE and figures as historically, geographically and culturally diverse as Plato, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Dewey, Matthew Arnold, Maria Montessori, Burrhus Skinner and Paulo Freire have been included in the roll-call of key
formative figures (Palmer, 2001a, 2001b). Moreover, current approaches to teaching and learning are divergent; one source cites fifty different theories of learning and teaching (Kearsley, 2011). I therefore have restricted the discussion to those figures and theories that can be seen as providing the more immediate context to training within Great Britain. Similarly, the literature on group dynamics and processes is too substantial to effectively survey, despite its relevance to training dynamics. As Cartwright (1968) commented, the literature is vast and stretches back to ‘the distant past’ (pref. i). I have also purposefully restricted the review to twentieth and twenty-first century literature, as this period marked the inception of counselling training and the counselling trainer role. I predominantly stay with the British context, although I explore literature from elsewhere when it can be argued to have impacted on and/or illuminate developments here. I also have diverted my research at points to look at the literature concerning other occupational/professional groups, whose experience might help contextualise that of counselling trainers.

I may give the appearance of having carefully chosen the dolls well-in-advance. The undesirability of doing so is pointed to in Hart’s (1998) description of the two-fold function of a literature review, one to help the development of the research question and the other to support analysis of the findings. Dallos and Verte (2005) talk of a two-phase reviewing process, the initial phase aimed at contextualising the research question and the second focused on contextualisation of the findings. The infeasibility and undesirability of forward planning the whole reviewing process is thus clear. I have not, however, experienced it as a two-phase process, rather as an on-going process. As themes arose from the findings, so was new light shone on the question, stimulating further research of the literature, in turn leading me into fresh ways of approaching the findings. I have elected to present the review of the main body of literature referred to in a unified chapter, although I focus on particular elements within the discussion and add some fresh perspectives. I would emphasise the circling and, at points, somewhat meandering nature of the scoping process. I would also like to emphasise my sense of its potentially infinite nature. This review is a product of a line drawn in time – this far and no further within the contexts of this study’s time and word limits.
The starting-point for the review is the immediate literature concerning the counselling trainer role. What has been researched and written about its form, function and experiencing? I then turn to examine literature in the following areas:

- Underpinning models for counsellor training and their contextualisation within wider debates around professional education.

- Understandings of why people choose the work they do and what impacts on the sense of reward they take from their roles. My major focus is the literature that has emerged from vocational psychology, examining factors such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and the relationship between stress, burnout and occupational role.

- Examination of the wider institutional context, its shifting character and current educational currents most pertinent to counsellor training programmes. My major, although not exclusive, focus is the university setting. This is one of growing significance as courses are increasingly delivered within or validated by universities.

- The shifting understandings of the professions and professionalisation processes. Here I briefly examine research from nursing to help in the task of comparing and contrasting.

I have not always managed to keep the divisions as neatly as I would have liked. For instance, I found myself including discussion of the university setting within all four sections. I will return to this in my discussion section, but would at this point like to flag up my sense that this reflects more the interconnectedness of the role with its contexts than editorial incompetence on my part.
2.2 THE TRAINER ROLE

The 1990s saw a flurry of British publications relating to counsellor training, perhaps reflecting a ‘coming of age’ of British counselling and training (Speedy, 1998) and the development of a more ‘specialised’ counselling training role (Thorne and Dryden, 1991). These texts need to be viewed within certain lenses. They tend (with exceptions) to depict training as a generic activity across settings and theoretical orientations (e.g. Thorne and Dryden, 1991; Dryden and Feltham, 1994; Johns, 1998). The texts are largely although not exclusively insider accounts based on personal experience and opinion: both Dryden and Feltham (1994) and McLeod (1995) comment on the paucity of research in the area. Criticisms of this early work are possible on these grounds, especially when it is factored in that the publication of books and articles is an activity associated largely with higher-profile, academically-confident university-based trainers. As such, these texts could be viewed as promulgating a particular viewpoint, as well as being inherently self-serving. Such criticisms need to be born in mind with all trainer accounts referred to in the review. However, some texts made concerted attempts to bring in a range of trainer voices (e.g. Johns, 1998). Moreover, early research was taking place (e.g. McLeod, 1995; Wheeler, 1996a, 1996b, 2000; Speedy, 1998a) and was bringing other trainers’ voices into the public arena. Trainee voices were also starting to be represented (e.g. Battye, 1991; Parker, 1998; Buchanan and Hughes, 2000), adding another dimension to the understanding of the role.

When viewed as historical documents, these texts can be seen as illustrative of training at a particular point of development, providing a useful horizon against which to set more current material. On a practical level, however, this early literature is included as it continues to function as core texts in the area, reflecting the restricted subsequent interest in trainers’ experiences and understanding. Authors have pursued particular lines of inquiry, for instance in the areas of assessment, settings and the content of training, stimulated in part by the drives towards evidence-based practice and intended statutory regulation. Both drives highlighted and problematised the continuing lack of convincing evidence of
training’s effectiveness in producing competent practitioners (e.g. Beutler et al, 2004; Lambert and Ogles, 2004; Rønnestad and Ladany, 2006). Recent research focusing on trainee perceptions of the training process helps shed some light on the trainer role (e.g. Folkes-Skinner et al, 2010; Smith, 2011). There have also been edited collections produced of training experience from the trainee viewpoint (Harding-Davies et al, 2004). They do not and cannot define the trainee experience. This was brought home to me as I read one account produced by a fellow-student on the course on which I trained as a counsellor. His experience was not mine. Even less can they define trainer experience, although they shine valuable light on the web of expectations within which the trainer may operate.

2.2.1 Nature of the trainer role

2.2.1.1 Multitasking

Multitasking has been put forward as an indisputable function of the trainer’s role across a range of texts. Johns (1998) made rich use of metaphor to describe the qualities required of a trainer to meet all the demands - trainer as tightrope walker, as plate spinner, as a Janus figure with the capacity to face two directions simultaneously and respond appropriately. Connor (1994) talked of the trainer as facilitator, educator and assessor. Dryden and Thorne (1991) described the role as combining ‘lecturer, group facilitator, skills trainer and scholarly academic’ (p.12). Dryden and Feltham (1994) drew up a typology of the differing demands, pointing to its multi-skilled as well as multitasked nature.
Table 1 Demands of the training role (Dryden and Feltham, 1994)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
<td>Organising, decision-making, planning, paperwork, marketing, meetings, phone calls, letters, filing, maintaining course documentation, recording student progress.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Constant balancing of accounts, fee-setting, recruiting, maintaining financial accountability, ensuring adequate personal income.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time demands</td>
<td>Time spent supporting teaching and performing essential related duties, e.g. preparation, marking, liaising with colleagues, interviewing, meetings, counselling and supervision, C.P.D.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Emotional pressures. Student expectations, student projections, expectations of other staff, conflict.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative</td>
<td>Need to be continually innovative in presenting material, to hold student interest and respect.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work-home relations</td>
<td>Maintaining an effective balance. Not allowing your home life to be invaded.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

More recent small-scale qualitative research has highlighted the expectations of the role from the trainee viewpoint. Students variously expressed the desire for tutors to act as teachers, support figures, professional models and supervisors, and consciousness-raisers (Truell, 2001; Bennetts, 2003; Folkes-Skinner et al, 2010; Smith, 2011).
2.2.1.2 Working within a context

As referred to earlier, Johns (1998) used images of ‘Chinese boxes’ or ‘Russian dolls’ to describe her sense of the role’s contextualised nature. Thomas (1998a) talked of working ‘in-between’ rafts of potentially opposing expectations. Speedy (2000) alluded to shifting contexts, talking of three generations of trainers - pioneers, entrepreneurs and established professionals. The wider issue of the shifting professional context will be discussed in section 2.6. In the following two sub-sections I focus on the institutional context and the professional context in terms of the professional gatekeeping role.

2.2.1.2.1 The institutional context

Training now takes place within a variety of settings across the public and private sectors. There is a lack of comparative studies that detail how the experience varies between settings. One small-scale study (Coldridge and Mickelborough, 2003) found more students from lower income groups in further education as against higher education counsellor training cohorts. This is an important finding given the rise of higher education generally as a location for psychotherapeutic training programmes (Murphy, 2011) and points to the importance of further research across all sectors.

Universities are the setting most discussed within the counselling literature. This may reflect the sector’s rising presence but may also reflect the dominance of universities in academic discourse alongside the importance of the university setting in counselling’s ‘professional project’ (Freidson, 1970a, 1970b). Debate continues about its merits as a setting. On the ‘positive’ side, potential benefits include: access to research methodology at a time when qualitative research is becoming more accepted; the opportunity to ally with other professional groups in a similar position; access to existing policies and procedures and potential funding; the encouragement of critical thinking; access to up-to-date literature; the potential for cross-fertilisation of ideas (Berry and Wolfe, 1997; Horton, 2002; Jacobs, 2002). On the minus side, the potential for misfit and marginalisation is highlighted (Berry and Wolfe, 1997; Loewenthal, 2002; Mace, 2002). Institutional
practices such as the linear form of educational programmes, the placing of emphasis on objective evidence, and the prioritising of cognition were depicted as having a detrimental effect not only on training but on the therapeutic endeavour as a whole (Parker, 2002). Loewenthal (2002) depicted a potential increase in the misfit in an era of ‘new managerialism’ within the university sector marked by concern with costings, marketing and league tables within universities.

The relationship between counselling, research and universities is also salient. As Mace (ibid) argued, universities are geared around research rather than teaching and practice, bringing pressure on tutors to research. Mace fails to distinguish between so-called ‘old’ and ‘new’ (post-1992) universities in his analysis. The importance of a strong research profile is most pronounced in the so-called Russell group of twenty (soon to be twenty-four) research-intensive universities, dominated by ‘old’ universities such as Nottingham, Manchester, Leeds, Oxford and Cambridge (Russell Group, 2012). Reflecting what might be regarded as their marginal status neither counselling or psychotherapy existed as separate compartments in the Research Assessment Exercise (R.A.E.) and were returned under education, sociology, allied health professions, psychology and health service research. Research in the field has thus been considered against criteria emerging from within different disciplines (Loewenthal, 2009, 2010). Such issues continue with the Research Excellence Framework, which replaced the R.A.E. (Loewenthal, 2010).

The potential for misfit to become conflictual has been argued. Mace (2002) framed the culture clash in terms of an incongruence between the closed model of learning in therapy and the open model of the university. One can discern in such an analysis the potential for substantial conflict in terms of power and authority ‘ownership’.
Table 2 Open and closed institutions (Mace, 2002)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Open model</th>
<th>Closed model</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rational authority</td>
<td>Personal authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External validation</td>
<td>Internal standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open curriculum</td>
<td>Focal curriculum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wide access</td>
<td>Restricted access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heterogeneous community</td>
<td>Homogenous community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A paper by Rizq (2007) added a psychoanalytic perspective. She argued that current threats to the university sector are experienced consciously as threats to academic freedom but unconsciously as basic threats to survival, leading to the enactment of basic defence mechanisms of splitting and projection on an organisational basis. Splitting occurs along pre-existing fault-lines between reason and emotion. Counselling’s association with emotion leads potentially to its idealisation but also to it being ‘denigrated and marginalised as representing dangerous contact with emotions and relationships that are unconsciously agreed to be antithetical to the safety of the institution against which it rigorously defends’ (Rizq, 2007, p.291). Training teams may act out such projections, confirming the danger they pose.

On a cautionary note, there is a danger of presenting the university sector as a monolithic structure and the university experience as a unified one (Wheeler and Miller, 2002). Distinctions need to be drawn between ‘old’ and ‘new’ universities or ex-polytechnics. New universities tend to be more market-orientated and, at the same time, more bureaucratic and micro-managed. Old universities are perceived as higher status and attract a more middle-class student body (Parker, 2002). There is also a tendency in the literature to conflate counselling and psychotherapy training which may obscure significant differences. Training, moreover, sits within different departments with differing traditions. While most counselling and psychotherapy departments sit within education, they can be found in medicine, health, sociology and psychology (Loewenthal, 2002). Universities are collections of different and overlapping ‘communities of practice’
(Wenger, 1998) within which the individual develops the practices and identity appropriate to that community.

2.2.1.2.2 The professional context: gatekeeping

McLeod (1992) has argued that increasing professionalisation of counselling from the 1980s led to the expectation that counsellors possess qualifications validating their capacity to practice effectively. This has led to the rising importance of the so-called gatekeeping function within training. Brear et al (2008) define it as involving ‘the identification of evaluative criteria and process, and the accountability of the gatekeeper to apply the criteria and take responsibility for the evaluative decisions’ (p.94)

Professional organisations are the current enforcers of such responsibilities. B.A.C.P. course accreditation criteria (2009) depict it as an obligation that starts from the screening of applicants and continues through the on-going monitoring, evaluation and assessment of student competence. Courses are obliged to have in place procedures to terminate the studies of students deemed as incompetent or ethically unsound.

Assessment has been depicted across a wide range of texts as one of the most challenging aspects of the tutor role (e.g. Wheeler, 1996a, 1996b, 2000a; Inskipp, 1996; Mearns, 1997, Brear et al, 2008). Samec (1995, p.2) described failing a psychotherapy candidate as ‘one of the most difficult decisions a psychotherapy supervisor is required to make’. Speedy (1998b) highlights how assessment of work can be experienced as assessment of self. Spencer (2006) talks of the difficulties of assessing personal development in the absence of clear benchmarks. This points to an important underlying dilemma in assessment - the continuing lack of clear evidence on which to base assessment criteria. For nearly two decades McLeod (1992, 1995, 2009) has flagged up the lack of published research into selection and assessment processes. There exists a host of ideas about how to assess competence but little is known about the validity and reliability of differing techniques.
Brear et al (2008) cite only two published British studies, both by Wheeler (1996a, 1996b, 2000a). Wheeler’s studies highlighted the difficulty trainers had in undertaking this aspect of the role in an institutional context. 44% of trainers in her first study (1996a) reported having passed people they thought unsuitable to be counsellors on grounds of personality or behaviour. Her studies also highlighted the subjective basis for trainers’ judgments on trainees’ competence. Personal qualities were the major basis for judgment, with the ‘personable-alooof’ construct the most frequently applied. Other commonly used descriptors were openness, secure, professionally competent, intelligent and committed. (1996b, 2000). Such conclusions are backed up by Samec’s (1995) study of supervisors who had failed trainees on psychoanalytic programmes in Sweden, the United States and Great Britain. The reasons cited were continuing anxiety and ‘narcissistic disturbances’ reflected in the students’ inability to accept supervision. The result for students was personal crisis, characterised by shame, guilt and denial.

As Wheeler (2000a) commented, such findings raise a range of questions touching on the selection of students, the role of personal development in training, trainer subjectivity, bias and power, and how to assess. Wheeler’s studies highlighted a dichotomy of powerfulness and felt powerlessness in the trainer position. While there are constraints on trainers’ autonomy in carrying out what they regard as their ethical obligation, conversely the power they hold is evidently open to misuse, especially given the inherent subjectivity of selection and assessment processes. Speedy (1998a) refers to the problem of the ‘power shadow’. Purton (1991) viewed trainers as selecting and assessing students based on understandings and fears derived from their theoretical base. Mearns (1997) argues that trainers tend to select trainees who are like themselves. Purton (ibid) depicted training as an initiation into a ‘worldview’, a ‘way of being’ (p.47) or ‘becoming one of us’ (p.35), comparable to induction into a quasi-religious faith. Interestingly, West (2009) relays being accused as a trainer of not ‘being one of us’, raising questions over whether similar processes operate also in the selection of trainers.
2.2.1.3 Interpersonal relating

Tutors interact with students on an individual basis but most commonly within groups (Thomas, 1998b). Working in groups is seen by trainees as central to learning (Harding-Davies et al, 2004) and widely conveyed as an essential component of the training experience (e.g. Sanders, 2003). B.A.C.P. course accreditation criteria (2009) include the obligation to ‘provide on-going opportunities for students and staff to meet as whole community to reflect on all aspects of the course’. The resultant community meetings take a variety of forms (Hill, 2002). Personal development groups are a common means of developing the self-awareness of trainees, a requirement again enshrined in B.A.C.P. course accreditation criteria (Lennie, 2007).

Groups carry the potential for powerful intrapersonal and interpersonal dynamics. From a psychodynamic viewpoint, group members, individually and collectively, play out developmental issues around trust and dependency, authority and control, and competition and rivalry. Processes of projection, transference, countertransference, and resistance are in operation within these interpersonal fields (Bion, 1961; Jacobs, 1991, 2006, 2010; Connor, 1994). While person-centred theory emphasises the potential of groups as environments for personal growth and empowerment (e.g. Rogers, 1969a, 1983) it also acknowledges the potentially difficult nature of group processes (Mearns, 1997; Fairhurst and Merry, 1999; Hill, 2002; O’Hara, 2003). The so-called responsibility dynamic (Mearns, 1997), which describes the tutors’ aim to encourage self-responsibility in students by not assuming responsibility for them, can lead to anger on the part of students. Here is an example of one student’s response:

‘In fact I really hated sharing responsibility for the self-selection of tutorial groups. It felt like we were doing the tutorial staff’s job. Why could they not have made it easier for us and sorted out the tutorial groups themselves?’ (Tran, 2004, p.13)

Yalom (1980), from an existential perspective, depicts a group as a ‘miniaturized social universe’ within which each member will have activated interpersonal
issues like ‘sibling rivalry, heterosexuality, homosexuality, competition with peers, intimacy, self-disclosure, generosity, giving and receiving, and so forth’ (p.238). Proctor’s (2002) notion of role power, societal power and historical power points to how group members (including tutors) bring in power and status derived from their role, their social position and their personal histories. Gender can attract strong and complex dynamics. Dinnerstein (1987) argued ‘men rule the world and women rock the cradle’, pointing to the expectations that might be set up of different-gendered trainers as well as power accorded. On a final note, the dynamic and shifting nature of group process is highlighted by some commenters (e.g. Proctor, 1991; Connor, 1994). One commonly referred to model is Tuckman’s (1965) four-stage ‘forming, storming, norming and performing’ model of group development.

The literature points not only to the potential for powerful dynamics but to the formidable range of expectations of the tutor in this field. Students’ desire for supportive relationships has been highlighted (e.g. Truell, 2001). In Smith’s (2011) research with students on a university-based post-graduate diploma programme, students expressed their desire for tutors to provide acceptance, affirmation, encouragement, support, openness, genuineness and self-disclosure, empathy; a sense of equality, a role model, sensitive, constructive feedback and a safe, supportive learning environment. Smith describes the importance of a ‘sense of security and cradling’ (p.240) and draws comparisons to the therapeutic alliance and in particular the core conditions of the person-centred approach (Rogers, 1957). The research also indicates the sensitivity of the gatekeeping role: Smith highlighted how ‘students strongly disliked feeling judged by tutors’ (p.237).

Some trainers have used the concept of archetypes to depict their sense of the role’s demands in the interpersonal field (Inskipp, 1991; Proctor, 1991; Connor, 1994, Thomas, 1998a). Proctor invokes the guru or wise woman, the earth mother, the clown or jester, the patriarch, the actor/director, the bureaucrat, the whore, the warrior and the judge. These symbolise the expectations of wisdom, caring, entertainment, order, structure, efficiency, love on tap, fierceness for truth and the
upholding of standards. Connor (1994) adds king, queen, god, guide, father and trickster to reflect power dynamics within the role.

Loewenthal and Snell (2008, p.46) talk of the tutor’s task as ‘to interpret group members’ defences in the hope of keeping members emotionally open’. They also talk of the tutor as ‘conductor’ of emotional learning. Acting as a model for students is also seen as important (e.g. Dryden and Thorne, 1991; Mearns, 1997). Dryden and Thorne argued that the trainer needs to model appropriate skills, attitudes and behaviour in the minutiae of everyday relating within the role, not only in their relationships with students but with co-tutors, tutors from other organisations and theoretical orientations, staff within the wider institutional context and so forth.

Proctor (1991) argued that different qualities and abilities are called on at differing points in the group’s life. The forming phase, for instance, calls on the trainers’ ability to draw and maintain boundaries while the storming phase requires the capacity ‘to recognise and endure (or enjoy) healthy ‘storming’ and fighting’ (p.69). Mearns (1997) listed the requirements of a person-centred tutor thus: to function fluidly within ‘open process’; non-defensiveness; transparency, empathy; unconditional positive regard; expertise in holding the responsibility dynamic; expertise as a facilitator. He refers to the requirement for authenticity, the need not to hide ‘behind a role or a repertoire’ but to be visible and involved (p.161).

### 2.2.2 The experience of the tutor role

I have elected to distinguish here between negative and positive experiencing, while acknowledging the simplistic nature of such a divide. Such splitting reflects presentational requirements rather than a clearly perceived division in lived experience, as will become clear in exploring certain dimensions of this lived experience below.
2.2.2.1 Negative experiencing

Dryden and Thorne (1991) depict the trainer role as highly challenging and the trainer as somewhat of a heroic figure. Key to carrying out the role is a nature ‘bold enough to undertake a task where success ultimately depends not simply on knowledge or even on experience but on a quality of being’ (p.14). This mirrors an identified tendency in therapeutic literature to paint a picture of therapist as hero ‘who, with potent techniques and procedures, intervenes in clients’ lives and fixes their malfunctioning machinery’ (Tallman and Bohart, 2000, p.91). The intensity of the demands and their impact on the person of the trainer is woven through the 1990s trainer accounts. Edwards (1998) likened her experiences to ‘negotiating white water rapids’ (p.49). Thomas (1998a) stated that for ‘my first five years as a counselling trainer I felt continually confused, inadequate, ineffective and depleted’ (p.17). She argued that Dryden and Feltham’s (1994) typology of demands failed to adequately convey the ‘intense personal investment and sensitivity involved in being effective’ (p.18). She referred to her sense of loneliness, especially in settings where the special requirements of running such courses were not recognised. Loewenthal and Snell (2008) talk of rawness, of being ‘stretched to our limits, in varying ways, with each student group: angered, frustrated, despairing, moved in different ways’ (p.39). Thomas (1998a) spoke of the pain of being typecast. Mearns (1997, p.202) referred to the bruising impact of some group encounters:

‘I have faced descriptions of myself which would make even the most insensitive man cry. I have been called an ‘abuser’ by more people than I can remember. Four people have used the term ‘satan’ in relation to me and probably the most frightening of all was the course member who described me as ‘the devil incarnate.’

Co-tutoring, a relationship ‘as intense as a marriage or partnership’ (Thomas, 1998a, pp.25-26), could be a source of negative experience as well as reward (Edwards, 1998; Thomas, 1998a). There is potential for splitting - Thomas talks
of the difficult dynamics when co-tutors are perceived constantly in particular archetypes, either good or bad. While acknowledging the supportive benefits, tutors in Edwards’ (1998) small scale study also referred to the tension and frustration that could result from imbalances of confidence and experience between trainers.

The negative impact of settings again is largely to be extracted from personal accounts of trainers and, indirectly, trainees. As previously mentioned, the accounts focus largely on the university sector. Waller (2002) talks of mushrooming bureaucratic demands, poor pay, an inadequate working environment, lack of support and time for developmental activities. She echoes Rizq (2007) in her sense of feeling problematised by the institution for wanting privileged resources. While Speedy (1998b) described the university setting as advantageous in terms of its provision of existing frameworks and facilities and as accommodating of person-centred counselling training, she identified a sense of mismatch, a lack of compatibility and the need to ‘tread determinedly, but softly’ (p.84). She observed that trainers can react by depicting themselves as caught in conflict with the enemy, a tendency Johns (1998) acknowledged as a seductive one.

The difficulties in undertaking the professional gatekeeping aspects of the trainer role have already been referred to. Connor (1994, p.156) called it ‘perhaps the most unloved’ aspect of the work. It was pinpointed as a source of stress in what still stands a key piece of research in the area. In response to his own experiences, McLeod (1995) undertook a questionnaire-based survey of tutors’ experiences of stress. The sample consisted of twenty-seven part-time and full-time tutors from psychodynamic and humanistic orientations, mostly from college or university environments. His findings were as follows:
Table 3 Causes of trainer stress (McLeod, 1995)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Major themes</th>
<th>Sub-categories/ underlying themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Relationships with students | • Issues arising from evaluation of students  
• Student projections  
• Working with students with very different value systems  
• Being observed, feeling exposed and vulnerable  
• Causing distress to students  
*Underlying dilemma*: what sort of relationship to have with students? |
| Relationships with colleagues | • Poor relationships with colleagues  
• Absence of colleagues in an ‘alien environment’  
*Underlying theme*: need for strong relationships to manage parallel processes student group-staff group |
| Organisational pressures | • Inadequate resourcing  
• Clashing value systems counselling-organisations |
| Workload | • The need to multi task  
• Dangers of overload and burnout |
| Other sources | • Self-induced pressure–doubting own competence  
• Inadequate payment  
• Boredom of repetition  
• Difficulty in finding safe therapy and supervision |

As the table demonstrates, relating with students was the most frequently cited cause of stress, with issues around assessment subsumed here. Relationships with colleagues could be both a source of stress and of coping with stress – reflecting the false nature of the division I have employed. Organisational pressures and the multitasking nature of the role led to a sense of tension and overload. Other sources related to issues seen as significant by individual trainers. These included pressures they brought to bear on themselves, low pay and repeated delivery of the same courses. The public nature of the role and hence difficulty in gaining safe therapy and supervision was alluded to.

McLeod highlighted the differing ways that tutors responded to pressures. ‘Positively’, trainers applied proactive strategies in the attempt to manage and contain demands. Seeking support formally and informally from others was a key
strategy but tutors also applied self-help techniques such as time management, self-challenge and attending to boundaries between home and work life. In ‘negative’ terms they reacted to stressors in the form of isolation and illness. Illness ranged from temporary fatigue to needing medical treatment and time off work. Symptoms reported were described by McLeod as typical stress responses. The single most reported reaction was feeling ‘emotionally drained’ (p.158). Another was that of isolation or withdrawal, which could be a felt sense or a process whereby tutors distanced themselves emotionally from students and the role.

On a comparative note, a research study into the experience of ‘counselor educators’ was undertaken in the 1990s in the United States (Parr et al, 1996). In a questionnaire-based survey of members of the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, a division of the American Counseling Association, the majority of respondents reported themselves as experiencing only occasional burnout, and over half perceived their career stress as no greater than moderate. The more positive experiencing of the role within the U.S.A. does indicate that there might be factors particular to the British context that impact on the quality of the work experience of British counsellor trainers.

2.2.2.2 Positive experiences

As with the negative experiencing of the role, the major source of evidence is the published accounts of high-profile trainers. There is a lack of research focused on the satisfactions of the role, and the accounts’ specific focus is not the role’s satisfactions. To misquote a saying, good news is no news. This section, therefore, is, by necessity, brief, reflecting the bias in the literature.

McLeod’s (1995) study again informs. He extended the brief in order to enquire into sources of work satisfaction for tutors. As McLeod commented, a sense of privilege was woven through the trainers’ responses. Mirroring the intensity of reported demands was a richness of reward. Trainers derived satisfaction from relationships with students and colleagues, the sense of learning and development
they gained from the process and the enjoyment of witnessing student progress. A sense of personal growth, of fulfilling personal potential was part of the positivity of the experience for trainers.

The sense of reward is replicated elsewhere. Mearns (1997) talked of the excitement he experiences in working with students and witnessing their growth in self-acceptance. Thomas (1998a) described the role as ‘uplifting, exciting, inspiring and deeply humanising’ (p.17) with the negatives and positives going together ‘like yin and yang’. Edwards (1998) referred to the real satisfaction of co-training. Stokes (1998) described her experience as a trainer of volunteers as ‘a little like falling in love’ (p.130). The female trainers in Speedy’s (1998a) study talked of the satisfactions of being part of a shifting family of trainers. These female networks, based on love and friendship as well as work, were seen as empowering.

Bearing in mind the potential significance of national difference, a final source is the U.S. research study (Parr et al, 1996) which aimed to not only measure the frequency of reported stress but the sense of overall satisfaction with the role. Respondents were asked to rate the desirability of a range of work-related characteristics and assess the extent to which they characterised their role. The largest positive correlation resided in so-called ‘harmony’ factors such as: doing work consistent with personally-held values; perceiving that efforts hold value to others and society; being able to do things compatible with self-identity; believing in the potency of my work to make a difference; receiving trust and respect from my colleagues.
2.3 MODELS OF COUNSELLOR TRAINING

The British training sector was heavily influenced in its early stages by developments within America (Bolger, 1985; Connor, 1994; Johns, 1998; McLeod, 2009). The trainer role was hence shaped by American ideas concerning pertinent teaching and learning processes as well as influenced by the range of occupational backgrounds from which trainers were drawn (Connor, 1994; Mahler, 1995). Connor describes her own training in the 1960s thus:

‘We learned about theories mainly from books, lectures and discussions. Our lecturers had not been counsellors themselves, but came from fields of education, psychology, social work and careers guidance.’ (p.2)

As indicated, didactic methods dominated initially, with the emphasis shifting to incorporate practical training and experiential learning methods aimed at stimulating personal development (Bolger, 1985). As McLeod (2009) argues, the emergence of client-centred therapy in the 1940s and 1950s brought a raft of new ideas about how to train counsellors. Carl Rogers was hugely significant, devoting an entire chapter in ‘Client-Centered Therapy’ (1951) to student-centred learning, and expounding his beliefs more fully in his ‘Freedom to Learn’ texts (1969b, 1983). He viewed personalised experiential learning as fundamental to the educational process and the tutor’s role as one of facilitation of learning. Crucial to the process was the empowerment of learners and the building of equal relationships based on the tutor’s ‘genuineness, prizing, and empathy’ (Rogers, 1983, p.135). His description of traditional teaching as based on the ‘mug-and-jug’ theory reflects the banking analogy pejoratively applied by Freire (1972). For Rogers, learning outcomes were to be decided by students not dictated by trainers. McLeod (2009) talks of client-centred ideas bringing a more multifaceted and open approach to learning, for instance in the incorporation of experiential group work to raise self-awareness, greater democratisation in terms of the incorporation of student appraisal alongside staff appraisal, the development of skills workshops and so forth.
The second wave of American influence (Bolger, 1985) consisted of the introduction of more structured approaches to skills training. Carkhuff’s (1969) human resource development model married Truax and Carkhuff’s (1967) five-point scale measuring the presence of four core therapeutic ingredients (empathy, respect, genuineness and concreteness) with the concepts of phases of helping and their attendant skills. Gerard Egan’s Skilled Helper model (1976) provided a four-stage, eight-step problem-management framework for helping. The Micro-skills model of Ivey and Galvin (1984) provided a systematic approach to training in specific skills applicable trans-theoretically. Kagan’s interpersonal process recall (1984) placed the systematic examination of recorded practice at the centre of skills development.

McLeod (2009) argues that a broad consensus has now developed concerning an appropriate counsellor training curriculum. Using the language of competences he argues the existence of an agreement that training should focus on helping students to acquire a theoretical framework, develop counselling skills, work on self, learn to deal with professional issues and to use research to inform practice. This statement of consensus can serve to obscure the disagreement and debate that still occurs in the field, which McLeod simultaneously acknowledges. The debate focuses not only on the content but the process of training.

With reference to content, issues such as what constitutes an appropriate theoretical base for a training programme are raised. There has been a long-run debate over whether training should be based on a core model or introduce students to a range of differing ways of understanding therapeutic practice (e.g. Feltham, 2000; Wheeler, 2000a). The debate is sharpened by research demonstrating that the majority of therapists end up defining themselves as integrative (Orlinsky & Rønnestad, 2005). Moreover, although therapists may define themselves with reference to a core model, it appears that they frequently utilise understanding from across differing orientations within their practice (Hollanders and McLeod, 1999). As Horton (2012) argues, integration can be seen as a personal process unique to the individual practitioner whereby all therapists become at some level integrative practitioners. The lack of convincing evidence of
one approach’s superior effectiveness (Cooper, 2008) points up the ongoing significance and salience of the debate.

In terms of work on self, there is a lack of clarity and a multiplicity of meanings and purposes attached to the notion of personal development (e.g. Irving and Williams, 1999; Donati and Watts, 2005). Moreover, the function and place of personal therapy, personal development groups and community meetings have all been individually and separately questioned. There is contradictory research evidence and opinion concerning the importance of personal therapy. While outcome studies have shown little clear evidence of its contribution to effective practice (e.g. Greenberg and Staller, 1981), more recent qualitative studies have demonstrated the significance placed on it by therapists (e.g. Orlinsky et al, 2001; Rizq and Target, 2008; Orlinsky et al, 2011). Groupwork has attracted similar difference of opinion re its utility. Mearns (1997) saw large group work as more significant to personal development than personal therapy. Lennie (2007), on the other hand, questioned the extent to which the experience of personal development groups prepares trainees for the one-to-one encounter that characterises counselling. In Hill’s (2002) survey of B.A.C.P. accredited courses, community meetings and personal development groups attracted the lowest ratings in terms of their relative importance to training. It should be noted, however, that the tutors assessed all aspects of training as bearing importance.

While there is less obvious dissent over the place of skills development and dealing with professional issues within the curriculum, the place of research is hotly contended. As discussed further in section 2.3.2., B.A.C.P. has demonstrated its support for such initiatives by including the development of research awareness and researcher skills (as evidenced and developed by the undertaking of ‘small-scale research projects’) within its 2008 course accreditation criteria. However, there has been a long-established lack of identification on the part of either teachers or counsellors with the importance of research to the development of practice. Williams and Irving (1999) spoke in terms of an ‘anti-research culture’ in counselling, with research often seen as an academic pursuit and thus irrelevant to practitioners. Watkins & Schneider (1991) went as far as talking of
two independent professions of counselling: researchers and counselling practitioners. Counselling trainees frequently dislike and perform poorly on research-orientated requirements (Feltham, 2010).

What is unclear from the literature is how individual tutors might assume different positions on the question. Divisions of opinion could result from tutors’ primary involvement in specific areas of the curriculum (e.g. personal development or research awareness). There might be a difference of viewpoint between those holding a more specific responsibility and those holding a wider, more general training brief. Moreover, although somewhat simplistic, those more closely identified with the professionalization project (e.g. Stinckens and Elliott, 2009) might be expected to emphasise the importance of student engagement with research as against the more critical stance of those assuming an anti-professional position (e.g. House, 1997). This is an area that would itself benefit from greater research.

2.3.1 Counselling training, professional education and the reflective practitioner v. scientist-practitioner debate

Eruat (1994) described the whole area of professional learning as one that had been under-examined and little researched. Rivers et al (1998) argued that many key decisions on professional training have resulted from political impetus rather than research-based evidence. The debate over an appropriate model for counsellor training mirrors wider debate in the professional field, itself characterised by competing models and potentially incongruent theories of learning.

An exemplar is the argument concerning the relative merits of the ‘scientist-practitioner’ and ‘reflective models’ of professional preparation. The reflective practitioner model is largely, although not exclusively, associated with the work of Schön (1983, 1987, 1991, 1996). It has become hugely influential in the field of professional education within the U.K., Australia and the U.S.A. (Greenwood, 1993) and is especially influential in teacher and nurse education. It is firmly
rooted in experiential and reflective learning notions. Schön began with the metaphor of art rather than science for professional practice. He depicted practitioners as ‘worldmakers whose armamentarium gives them frames with which to envisage coherence and tools with which to impose their images on situations of their practice’ (1987, p.218). He developed the notion of a reflective practicum within which students would be helped to develop the types of artistry required for competence in the ‘indeterminate zones of practice’. Linking to Polanyi’s concept of tacit knowing (1967), Schön depicted knowing-in-action as crucial to competence, a knowing that is indeed articulated in action: ‘We reveal it by our spontaneous, skilful execution of the performance; and we are characteristically unable to make it verbally explicit’ (1987, p.25). Central to knowing-in-action is reflection-in-action, whereby the practitioner continually adapts their practice in response to unexpected developments or surprises. Schön (1987) uses the analogy of jazz musicians improvising together, perpetually adapting their responses in tune with the other. Reflection-in-action feeds into reflection-on-action and both inform future practice or knowing-in-action. In the practicum, the focus is ‘learning by doing, coaching rather than teaching, and a dialogue of reciprocal reflection-in-action between coach and student’ (ibid, p.303).

The reflective practitioner model rose against the backdrop of the dominance of the scientist-practitioner model in certain fields of professional training, a model that sits more easily with competence-based education and training (CBET) principles. In America, known as the ‘boulder model’, it has been widely used as the underpinning for training in the fields of clinical, counselling, school, and industrial psychology (Sauer and Huber, 2007). It also provides a foundation for counselling psychology training in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom (Corrie and Callahan, 2000; O’Gorman, 2001). Foundational to the scientist-practitioner model is technical rationality or the notion that ‘professional activity consists of instrumental problem solving made rigorous by the application of scientific theory and technique’ (Schön, 1996, p.8). According to O’Gorman (2001, p.164) it brings together ‘the service orientation of the practitioner with the academic research orientation of the scientist to provide a form of training unique in the health and human service professions’. As applied
to counselling psychology, the model maintains that psychologists are both researchers and practitioners and that their training should combine applied and theoretical knowledge in three major areas: diagnosis, treatment and research (Myers, 2007).

Both models have attracted criticism. O’Gorman (2001) provided a useful summary of the major criticisms of the scientist-practitioner model. Making science foundational to training is problematic if one accepts science as a set of ‘socially constructed beliefs’ rather than objective truths. The model is seen as underplaying the role of other competencies and forms of knowing, including tacit knowledge and relational skills. A further criticism is the limited utility of scientific findings. While practitioners may apply a scientific approach to their work, the bulk of psychological findings are not directly applicable. Fourthly, at the time of the model’s inception, most professional psychologists were employed in research and academia; few were involved in practicing psychotherapy. The situation is now reversed (Myers, 2007). Moreover, the viability of training individuals to be scientists as well as practitioners is questioned (Stricker, 2000; Mellot and Mehr, 2007). Steffy (2003) described his confusion as a student at being simultaneously taught by research oriented, left brained academics and more creative right-brained practitioners. Schön characterised its dominance in professional training as rooted more in the drive to obtain and/or maintain professional status than its relevance to practice. Technical rationality, he argued, does not and cannot deal with the ‘indeterminate, swampy zones’ (1987, p.3) that are central to professional practice. He argued that professional education needs to prepare practitioners for the ‘complex, unstable, uncertain, and conflictual worlds of practice’ (1987, p.12).

Schön’s approach has similarly attracted criticism. He has been accused of dichotomous thinking, of presenting the world of professional education in a misleading manner. From within teaching, Shulman (1988) argued that the majority of teachers combine the technical and the reflective, the theoretical and the practical, the universal and the concrete in their practice. From within nursing education, Greenwood (1993) argued that the approach contained weaknesses and inconsistencies, leading to the implementation of dubious strategies. The implicit
undervaluing of reflection-before-action is criticised. Greenwood argues that a skillful practitioner needs proficiency in both translating intention into actions and feedback from actions to inform future intentions. The practicum is based on simulation rather than real-life situations, which seriously weakens its potential for meaningful reflection-in-action. It can encourage dependency on the tutor or ‘coach’ (Usher et al, 1997). Ironically, although a counterblast to technical-rationality, its methods can easily be accommodated to a technicist model (ibid). Crucially, Usher et al argue that by decontextualizing reflection-in-action, Schön neglects the situatedness of practitioner experience. ‘Schon writes context and history out of practice’ (p.169) and fails to provide ‘a reflexive critique of the situatedness of practice’ (ibid). In an implicit recognition of the limitations of both approaches, Martin (2010) argues a twin-base of the scientist-practitioner and reflective practitioner models for British counselling psychology.

2.3.2 Recent trends in British counsellor training

While the predominant model for counsellor training can be equated more easily with elements of the reflective practitioner model, the scientist-practitioner model has been suggested as a model relevant to counsellor training especially in relation to the increased call for evidence-based practice (e.g. Barraclough, 2006). One can characterise recent moves in training as marking a shift towards a scientist-practitioner model in its broadest sense. As Strawbridge and Woolfe (2010) state, the term scientist-practitioner implies ‘an engagement in research and the role of practitioner as producer, as well as user, of knowledge and understanding’ (p.6). It can be argued that the new criteria for B.A.C.P. course accreditation (2009) reflect such principles. Based around a core curriculum and focused on core competencies, it can be viewed as reflecting the dominance of the competence discourse in political and educational circles (Wheeler and Rowland, 2008). The core curriculum was designed to include research awareness, evidence-based practice and mental health alongside more ‘traditional’ areas such as skills, personal development, placement and the wider social, group and institutional context. The course accreditation criteria go further than simply research awareness: students are expected to engage in ‘small-scale research projects’ (criterion B3.8). Research, it seems, has become integral to counselling discourse.
A wider international initiative to encourage evidence-based principles is the International Project on the Effectiveness of Psychotherapy and Psychotherapy Training (IPEPPT). Its goal is to ‘improve psychotherapy and research by encouraging systematic research in therapy training institutes and university-based training clinics’ (Stinckens and Elliott, 2009, p.146).

There has also occurred a drive to develop a research base for counsellor training. The IPEPPT also aims to promote research into the effectiveness of psychotherapy training (Elliott and Zucconi, 2006). Within Britain, the Strathclyde protocol focuses on a broad-based evaluation of training based on quantitative outcome studies, qualitative interviews and intensive case studies (see op.cit. Folkes-Skinner et al, 2010). Recommendations for training are starting to emerge from within the research field. For example, Hill et al’s (2007) study based on the journals of students on an intensive training programme suggested the importance of instruction, support, the facilitation of exploration and challenge on the part of supervisors. Emphasising students’ active role in learning, they recommended that tutors pay attention to the differing coping and learning styles of students. Folkes-Skinner et al (2010) concluded that experiential learning exercises such as role-play and group supervision seemed to influence and support the process of change but that the fundamental driver of change may be work with clients. Fitzpatrick et al (2010) similarly found practice to be important in the development of students’ theoretical base. They indicated the importance of the supervisory alliance, responsiveness to individual needs, time and space for reflection, providing assignments to assist theoretical integration, and peer mentoring systems. Smith (2011) recommended that tutors attend to constructing strong positive relationships with students, creating a safe learning environment, and acknowledging and working to minimise power imbalances.

Research into the developmental processes of counsellors has also implicitly or explicitly produced recommendations for training and trainers, although their impact is questionable given the ‘anti-research culture’ (Williams and Irving, 1999) in teaching and counselling. One source is the developmental model of Rønnestad and Skovholt (2003), based on the findings from interviews with over one hundred therapists at different points in their career. Their six phase model of
development consists of lay helper, beginning student, advanced student, novice professional, experienced professional and senior professional. Beginning students were characterised by anxiety and self-doubt, dependency and vulnerability. Supportive feedback was depicted as important, as well as an introduction to easily-mastered generally-applicable methods and understandings and exposure to the work of seasoned practitioners on which they could base their practice. Counter-developmental is ‘the achievement orientation of the academic culture [and] the power-differential between professor/supervisor and student’ (p.14). Orlinsky and Rønnestad (2005) made a number of training-related recommendations aimed at maximising progress by encouraging healing involvement and minimising stressful involvement. These included: a focus in selection on relational qualities and interpersonal skills; an early start for clinical practice; a matching of practice provision to level of development; strong supervision and support for practice; theory offered in a pragmatic rather than dogmatic spirit; the opportunity for students to operate in a range of modalities.

The continuing dynamism of the training field is also evident. Dissent is part of this dynamism. In a counterblast to modularised, commodified learning, Loewenthal and Snell (2008) have proposed a model based on that in use within the M.Sc programme at Roehampton University. Redolent with reflective practitioner overtones, it champions a learning community approach, founded on relational, experiential learning as well as emotional learning and labour. Other developments perhaps reflect a move to reconcile. Cooper and McLeod’s (2011) pluralistic approach specifically allies itself with an anti-schoolist approach. Pluralistic practice is seen as drawing on methods from differing orientations and reflecting the needs of a postmodern world. Training in this model focuses on a curriculum that provides: a critical overview of the field; preparation for a lifelong learning process; an emphasis on the identification and appreciation of both the therapist’s and client’s strengths and resources; a practical understanding of the nature of collaboration. The debate remains live.
2.4 THE WORLD OF WORK

2.4.1 Introduction

I move in this section to contextualise trainers’ sense of the satisfactions and rewards of their role within literature relating to the motivations that bring people to undertake certain work roles and the factors that impact on the sense of satisfaction they experience within their adopted role. I provide an overview of such literature, focusing on areas that potentially bear most relevance. I begin with an examination of the literature from vocational psychology relating to work motivation. I then move to literature that examines the relationship in particular between work and stress patterns. Although examined separately, again they are intertwined. Our motivations influence how we measure the rewards of our work and vice-versa.

This literature, while valuable for contextualising the research study, needs to be viewed with some caution. Much of the literature within the area has been developed within the North American context and such literature dominates the field of vocational psychology (Leung, 2008). Although theories have been updated in response to research evidence emerging internationally, they remain culturally anchored in the occupational contexts of the USA. As Leung argues, researchers should be careful not to transport these theories to their own contexts without cultural adaptation and modification.

A second note of caution stems from the strength of the truth claims that emanate from the dominant use of large-scale surveys based on self-report questionnaires within the field. While the use of self-report is entirely congruent with any attempt to explore perception, there is a tendency to depict surveys based on such methods of data collection as presenting some form of objective truth. Here is a quote from one such survey within British universities as illustration. It begins by acknowledging its base in self-report but ends by giving the results the authority of objective findings:
‘This review sought to quantify the phenomenon of burnout as reported by university teaching staff and is the first systematic review examining the extent of the phenomenon within full time non-medical university teaching staff. The review found evidence of burnout within this occupational group with student interaction, youth and gender established as significant predictive factors. The review revealed that the extent of burnout in university teaching staff is comparable with other education and medical professionals.’ (Watts and Robertson, 2011, p.46)

Such a tendency reflects perhaps the continued dominance of a positivist framework within occupational stress research (McAuley et al, 2007). While care is taken in the design and analysis of research studies to take account of, for instance, the possibility of response distortion, there remains the danger of misapplication and misrepresentation of findings. Moreover, the emphasis on the nomothetic can obscure the idiographic, the more individual and/or localised perspective. As discussed in the following chapter, such nomothetic studies can construct ‘phantom cohorts’ of ‘people who never were and never could be’ (Kastenbaum, 1985, in Datan et al, 1987, p.156). Such surveys can also obscure the historic perspective. As Heidegger (2002) stated, the individual interprets new stimuli in light of a priori experiences and meaning-making processes. The current experience of work-related satisfactions and demands needs to be contextualised within such past experience, for example, within perceptions of deterioration or improvement in the working environment. They also need to be contextualised within desired outcomes. As Spinelli (1989, p.71) argues, ‘desired outcomes, or future expectations, must be present and must, in some ways, influence our perceptions’. These studies, while illuminating the research question, need to be viewed within such a meaning-making matrix.

2.4.2 Motivation

2.4.2.1 The ‘decline of vocation’ theory

There have been significant changes in the world of work in the west in the course of the last two centuries. Fouad (2007) talks of large-scale twentieth century
economic and technological changes making assumptions of employment for life within one company redundant. Such changes are argued to have led to the emergence of a new career profile characterised by a series of chosen or forced transitions for individuals over their lifespan. Contemporary careers are said to have become boundaryless (e.g. Arthur and Rousseau, 1996), reflecting a ‘new deal’ whereby ‘employees have to engage in a range of career self-management activities to create career options that allow them to realize their personal career goals and ensure their employability’ (De Vos and Soens, 2008, p.449). Such changes are said to have marginalised the notion of vocation, connected as it is with life-long commitment to a chosen career path (Lips-Wiersma and McMorland, 2006). Vocation, derived from the Latin verb ‘vocare’, to call or summon, was originally connected with religious purpose but is now more generally connected with the attribution of meaning and purpose to work. It refers to the accomplishment of something meaningful to self and of consequence to the world beyond the self (Damon et al, 2003).

Critics argue, however, for its continuing relevance. It is still publicly attached to, and arguably expected of certain occupational roles such as teaching and nursing (White, 2002). Some authors cite its continuing relevance to individual motivation. In nursing, Mackay (1998) describes a broad dichotomy between nurses who adopt a vocational view and those who adopt a professional view of their occupation. While the professionalising camp has gained a position of ascendancy from their strongholds in nurse education and at national level, motivation at grass roots level remains divided (Mackay, 1998). Ideas redolent of vocation, such as putting others first and of being of service to others, continue to be embedded in attitudes and practices expressed by nurses (Mackay, 1998).

Commentators have argued its continuing and perhaps resurgent relevance in the new era of individualised career paths. The importance of the so-called ‘subjective career’, or the individual’s perception of their career’s meaning and purpose, is becoming increasingly emphasised (Lips-Wiersma and McMorland, 2006). Career and vocational discourses can be complementary in enabling the individual to maintain a sense of purpose in the new climate (ibid). Vocational overtones are evident in the notion of the protean career, one of the variations on the
boundaryless career, characterised by concerns about employability but also with ‘achieving goals that are personally meaningful’ (Mirvis and Hall, 1996, p. 251). A protean career attitude is reflected in the manner in which individuals construct their career path based upon their personal values and measure their success on subjective success criteria. Sargent and Domberger’s research study (2007) showed that contributing to society and maintaining a work-life balance were seen as two important components of such subjective success criteria. To add weight to such arguments, emerging constructivist approaches to career development allow the potential for vocational commitment to be one of the meanings individuals attach to their careers (Young and Collin, 2004). The relational approach recognises career choice as unique to the individual, subject to multi-layered influences at the micro and macro level, and as an embodied phenomenon with a socially, culturally and historically ascribed meaning (Özbilgin et al., 2005).

2.4.2.2 Vocation and Counselling

Historically, counselling in Britain and elsewhere has been linked with the notion of vocation. ‘The Faith of the Counsellors’, a seminal early text by Halmos (1965), contextualised the rise of counselling within the secularisation of British society and disillusion with politics as an agent of change. People who on vocational grounds would once have been attracted to the church or politics were turning to a career in counselling. He viewed counsellors as ‘imbued by sentiments of worthwhileness in giving personal service to others’ (p.29)

The early dominance of the voluntary sector in counselling and its continuing significance could be cited as evidence of a vocational commitment in counselling’s development. Holmes and Lindley (1989) talked of psychotherapy as ‘blindly supported by its advocates (p.2). Opposition to state regulation is often couched in ideological terms and can carry both political and spiritual overtones. Brian Thorne directly and proudly asserted his opposition to regulation in such terms: ‘You will note that I have referred to my ‘vocation’ as a therapist. For me, back in 1967, it certainly was experienced as a vocation – a calling which I had no option but to obey’ (2009). Although often applied in a pejorative manner,
counselling schools have been depicted as faith communities (e.g. Purton, 1991; Pilgrim, 1997).

Such arguments are, of course, open to dispute. The dominance of the voluntary sector could as easily be cited as demonstrating the failure of counselling to gain status as a profession. An apparent vocational commitment could obscure other, less altruistic motives. A psychoanalytic viewpoint would stress the importance of unconscious motivations. In Barnett’s (2007) study, psychoanalytic and psychodynamic psychotherapists identified early loss and narcissistic needs in their motivations to train as therapists. The wounded healer archetype is one frequently evoked in relation to counsellors (e.g. Wheeler, 2002; Mander, 2004). The wounded healer narrative is explored in Meekums’ (2008) autoethnographic exploration of becoming both a counsellor and trainer, within which she explores the significance of formative experiences within her childhood and youth in her identity development.

Bearing in mind the potential for competing explanations, there has emerged some support for the notion of counselling as vocation. In a recent piece of qualitative research, trainee counsellors in Britain reported a relationship between engaging in altruistic acts and becoming a counsellor (Swank et al, 2012). Support would also seem to come from a recent international research study of the development of psychotherapists (Orlinsky and Rønnestad, 2005). The fifteen year study sponsored by the Society for Psychotherapy Research (SPR) involved research with over 5,000 professionals involved in psychotherapeutic work. Only 2% described themselves as counsellor, hence care needs to be taken in applying these findings directly and uncritically to counselling. However, its conclusion that most therapists saw their work as ‘a calling or vocation, a worthy profession that is chosen at least in part to provide a sense of meaningful activity and personal fulfilment’ (p.11) would seem likely to reflect attitudes of British counsellors and by extension counsellor trainers. Again, although not directly transferable, Parr et al’s (1996) study of American counsellor trainers points to the potential for vocational purpose in trainers, recording as it did a developed sense of doing work both consistent with personally-held values and of value to others.
2.4.2.3 Intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation

Vocation is a form of intrinsic motivation which is characterised by the desire to be engaged in work ‘primarily for its own sake, because the work itself is interesting, engaging, or in some way satisfying’ (Amabile et al, 1994, p.950). Some authors focus on the interesting nature of the task itself. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) talked in terms of flow or the sense of fun, mastery, and growth potential that engagement in the work itself provides. Others focus more on the sense of reward gained from involvement in a task that one is motivated to undertake (Ryan and Deci, 2000). Chalofsky (2003) felt that the notion of meaningful work added a further dimension, that of the worker experiencing a sense of ‘integrated wholeness’ within the work. He cited the work of Rogers (1961) but particularly that of Maslow (1943, 1971), who referred to the importance of being values or B-values in work, including goodness, transcendence, uniqueness, aliveness, justice, richness and meaningfulness. Chalofsky saw integrated wholeness as having three interlinking dimensions: the bringing of one’s whole self to the role and developing of one’s potential; the experiencing of the work itself as growthful, creative, empowering and purposeful; a sense of balance in terms of congruence between differing aspects of the self and the work, and between giving to self and to others.

These types of rewards are commonly contrasted with extrinsic motivation, where the motivation derives from rewards external to the work itself. However, there was early recognition that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation was not mutually independent and could impact on each other in what might seem counter-intuitive ways. Substantial research has indicated that tangible rewards, such as money and prizes can work to actually undermine intrinsic motivation (Carton, 1996). Cognitive evaluation theory (CET) suggests that external factors which include tangible rewards as well as deadlines and supervision can reduce an individual’s sense of autonomy and in turn their intrinsic motivation (Deci, 1971; Deci, 1975). Conversely and perhaps more predictably, external factors, such as providing choice in how the work role is carried out, can enhance feelings of autonomy and increase intrinsic motivation (Gagné and Deci, 2005).
2.4.2.4 Person-environment fit

The importance of a fit between worker and work setting, the so-called ‘person-environment fit’, has been a significant focus for career theorists. The theory of work adjustment (TWA) views career choice and development as a continual process of adjustment and accommodation (Dawis and Lofquist, 1984; Dawis, 2002). The individual seeks a work environment that will meet their needs; organisations seek to employ workers who will satisfy their requirements. Holland’s (1985, 1997) influential version of the model is founded on the notion that certain personality types are drawn to particular work environments, with work satisfaction related to the level of person-environment fit. Support for person-environment fit theories has been demonstrated within a range of studies (Spokane et al., 2005). Research has demonstrated that individuals are attracted to environments that allow them to work with similar people or allow them to solve problems in preferred ways (Fouad, 2007). Studies have demonstrated a link between personality type and occupational setting. For instance, financial success, independence and self-realisation are often forwarded as important motivations for would-be entrepreneurs (Carter et al., 2003). Individuals who are strongly motivated to do public service are attracted to work for public organizations, perform more effectively within the job, and are more motivated by intrinsic rewards (Perry & Wise, 1990, Houston, 2000).

2.4.2.5 Self-concept and self-efficacy

Self-concept is awarded a central role in the influential theory of career development as formulated by Super (1969, 1980, 1990) and developed more recently by Savickas (1993, 2002). It would seem complementary to notions of counsellor career choices as shaped by unconscious motivations or the so-called ‘wounded healer’ narrative (Wheeler, 2002; Mander, 2004; Barnett, 2007; Meekums, 2008). It would also fit with the notion of the inter-relation of career choice and social background. People’s expectations are seen as shaped by ‘the practical limitations imposed upon them by their place in the field, their educational background, social connections, class position and so forth’ (Webb et al., 2002, p.3). Gender is one such variable with evident applicability to
counselling and counsellor training with their feminine bias. Men and women’s career paths tend to follow gender-traditional expectations, with early sex-role socialisation still exerting powerful influences on career choices (Armstrong and Crombie, 2000; White and White, 2006).

Super viewed the self-concept as largely laid down in childhood while Savickas’ more constructivist approach depicted the development and actualisation of the individual self-concept as a lifelong, co-constructive project. Super’s life-stage developmental framework is characterised by stages of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and disengagement in operation over the work life-cycle as a whole and within its individual phases. On a vocationally-related note, the importance of values in such processes has been highlighted. Some research has indicated that the protean group engage more than those who follow a traditional career path in critical reassessment of their career direction, questioning the fit between their career position and career values (Sargent and Domberger, 2007).

An emerging, relevant area of study is that of non-traditional occupational choices made by men, which would seem to embrace male counsellors and counsellor trainers. Early (American) research indicated that men tend to go into non-traditional fields for four major reasons: the desire for a less stressful and aggressive lifestyle; greater ability to pursue interests and talents not available in traditionally male occupations; increased job security; working alongside women (Chusmir, 1990; Hayes, 1989). Lease (2003) found non-traditional choices to be related to liberal attitudes, lower degree expectation and lower socio-economic status. Simpson (2005) found support for earlier research which indicated that men felt advantaged in some ways by their gender in non-traditional fields in terms of promotion opportunities, pay and benefits (e.g. Bradley, 1993; Williams, 1993).
2.5 STRESS AND BURNOUT

I move in this section to examine notions of stress and burnout, terms that have become dominant in contemporary work-related discourse and feature, perhaps not surprisingly therefore, in the discourse of the 1990s trainer accounts. It was noticeable that McLeod’s (1995) report of his study into stress did not include a definition, seemingly relying on a commonly-held understanding. However, although commonly used, stress remains a difficult concept to define, with researchers employing various models to explain workers’ aversive experiences (Watts and Robertson, 2011). There is some general agreement that it refers to a sense of depleted well-being that individuals can experience when faced with tasks which they perceive as both threatening and demanding of their resources. It involves a sense of feeling unable to cope (Mackay et al, 2004). It is generally accepted that prolonged or intense stress impacts on an individual’s mental and physical health. It has recently been estimated that work-related stress accounts for over a third of all new incidences of ill health in the UK, with a total of 13.5 million working days lost in 2006–2007 (HSE, 2009). Research in the area has revealed patterns in this overall picture, not only in terms of its predominance but also in its apparent causes. The factors that are argued to impact on the individual’s experience of stress are explored predominantly in section 2.5.1 and 2.5.4. The high levels of reported stress within certain economic sectors and occupations are discussed in section 2.5.2.

Burn-out is identified as one possible consequence of chronic stress in areas of work involving substantial interpersonal contact. It is a gradual process whereby the stress of working closely with individuals requiring support or guidance results in various symptoms detrimental to professional and personal functioning. It has three components – emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation or negative or uncaring attitudes to others, and a reduced personal accomplishment or proficiency (Maslach, 1986; Maslach and Jackson, 1981, 1993). Although any employee may be vulnerable to burnout, human service occupations, including teaching, are regarded as particularly susceptible (Brouwers and Tomic 2000; Farber 2000). In section 2.5.3 I focus on the literature which examines the
relationship between the emotional labour component of such occupations and the potential for both stress and burnout.

2.5.1 Models of stress

There is a substantial body of research and corpus of theoretical literature relating to stress. An early model (Cooper and Marshall, 1976) identified five sources of work-based stress. These were classed as intrinsic to the job (e.g. poor working conditions, long hours) or connected to role in the organisation (e.g. role ambiguity, role conflict), career development (including job security and promotion prospects), work relationships and organisational structure and climate. The ASSET stress questionnaire, widely used in British research across a range of organisations, added work-life balance, job satisfaction, level of autonomy and control, and levels of commitment on the part of employers to employees and vice-versa. (Johnson et al, 2005).

Two models that have dominated research internationally are the demand-control model and the effort-reward model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). The demand-control model (Karasek, 1979; Karasek and Theorell, 1990) focuses on the psychological demands of work, their extent and conflictual nature, alongside the level of job control enjoyed. Workers who face high demands but have little control over their work are seen as at risk of illness. The predictive nature of this model has been supported by a large number of occupational health studies (Schnall et al, 2000). An extended model also applied is the job demand-control-support model (Johnson and Hall, 1988). Workers at highest risk face high demands, have little control and low levels of support. Similarly, the effort-reward model (Siegrist, 1996) claims that low rewards in return for high efforts lead to negative emotions and stress responses in workers. Conversely, appropriate rewards lead to positive emotions and a sense of well-being (Siegrist, 2002). An important inclusion within this model is the variant of worker over-commitment. This equates to a propensity for stress connected with ‘a set of attitudes, behaviours, and emotions that reflect excessive endeavour combined with a strong desire for approval and esteem’ (Tsutsumi and Kawakami, 2004).
Influential in Britain has been the 2001 British Health and Safety Executive (H.S.E.) list of ‘stressor areas’. This depicts stress as conditioned by the level to which workers possess or are subject to the following: demands (including workload, work patterns and the working environment); control over role; level of support provided; positive working relationships; clarity of role; effectively managed organisational change. Fair and open management processes are seen as essential underpinnings for all of these.

Although not a stress model, Orlinsky and Rønnestad (2005) conceptualised therapists’ experience in a manner potentially helpful to the understanding of stress amongst counsellor trainers. In their survey of the professional development of psychotherapists they differentiated between healing and stressful involvement in work. Healing involvement is characterised by therapists ‘being invested, relating to patients in an affirming manner, experiencing flow in sessions and using constructive coping strategies to deal with difficulties’ (p.67). Stressful involvement is characterised by ‘frequent difficulties; in-session feelings of boredom, and usually anxiety, too; and coping with difficulties by avoiding therapeutic engagement’ (p.67-8). They found the major predictors of stressful involvement were situational conditions – experiencing little support from their work setting and restricted professional autonomy.

2.5.2 Susceptibility to stress by occupation

The available research overwhelmingly demonstrates the susceptibility to stress within certain occupational areas. The 2008/9 Labour Force Survey, commissioned by the HSE, found higher than average rates of work-related stress, depression or anxiety in ‘public administration and defence’, ‘health and social work’ and ‘education’. Susceptible occupational groups were ‘health and social welfare associate professionals’, ‘teaching and research professionals’, ‘corporate managers’ and ‘business and public service associates’. In a study of work-related stress across 26 occupations, the six that returned worse than average scores were ambulance workers, teachers, social services, customer services (call centres), prison officers and police (Johnson et al, 2005). The results can be broken down further. Teachers’ physical health, job satisfaction and psychological well-being
were all assessed as poorer than those of lecturers. College and university lecturers were not, however, differentiated. This touches on the difficulty of classifying counselling training, which one can argue sits outside straightforward categories and across settings. What this literature can only do is help contextualise the experience of training, not explain it.

Several large-scale studies have confirmed that people working in education are at higher risk of work-related stress than most other occupations (Johnson et al, 2005; Jones et al, 2006). U.K. surveys of academic and academic-related staff conducted in 1998 and 2004 found high reported levels of job-related stressors and psychological distress (Kinman, 1998; Kinman and Jones, 2003, 2004; Kinman et al, 2006). It is argued that academic work lacks clear boundaries and incorporates a wide range of roles with potentially competing demands (Fisher, 1994). Frequent interruptions, time pressures, lack of feeling valued, administrative load, inadequate support, limited promotion prospects, long working hours, and pressure on the work-life balance are all cited. A number of studies in the UK and elsewhere provide evidence that university employees encounter particular difficulties in maintaining an acceptable work-life balance (Doyle and Hind, 1998; Winefield et al, 2003). Diminished collegiality has also been pointed to (Doyle and Hind 1998; van Emmerik 2002). Job insecurity has been identified as a significant cause of stress for all employees (Tytherleigh et al, 2005). In 2006-7, 38 per cent of UK academic staff were employed on fixed-term contracts, the second highest level of casualisation of any employment group in the economy (Court and Kinman, 2008). National surveys from both the UK and Australia also suggest that institution age can have a significant influence on academic occupational stress, with staff employed in older universities, i.e. those established before 1992, reporting greater stress levels (Winefield et al. 2003; Tytherleigh et al, 2005). This has been connected with job security issues and concerns over achieving a work–life balance.

Recent pressures on the sector and cultural changes within it are said to have impacted negatively on staff. Kinman and Court (2010) pointed to rising student numbers, funding constraints, increased regulation, rising demands for excellence in all areas of activity, pressure to recruit and generate income through
entrepreneurial and research activities. Market-led policies require regular updating of the curriculum and its delivery and enhanced technical skills on the part of employees. Overall, the increasingly ‘consumer oriented’ approach to their studies on the part of students is said to have increased demands on staff (Chandler et al, 2002).

A recent research project has painted a similar picture of high stress levels in the further education sector. The 2011 survey of University and College Union (UCU) members working at colleges in England, Northern Ireland and Wales revealed that over 80% perceived their job as stressful. Staff cited excessive workloads accompanied by unachievable deadlines. The presence and impact of a bullying culture was also highlighted by a majority of staff.

2.5.3 The relationship between emotional labour, stress and burnout

Emotional labour is typified by three characteristics: face-to-face or voice contact with the public; a requirement for workers to produce an emotional state in another person; a degree of control over workers’ emotional expression (Smith and Lorentzon, 2005, 2007). It involves ‘emotion regulation processes’ in order to sustain an outward appearance that produces a sense of safety and being cared for in others (Hochschild, 1983). As such, it can involve emotional dissonance, or an incongruence, between internal experiencing and external expression. Much of the literature focuses on customer service jobs but Gray (2009) argues that it is an integral yet often unrecognised part of any employment that involves contact with people. Loewenthal and Snell (2008) specifically point to emotional labour as a helpful way of conceptualising the training endeavour.

Emotional labour is an ingredient common to high-stress occupations but the way that workers respond to the demands of emotional labour is argued to be an important variable in both stress and burnout levels (Hochschild, 1979, 1983). Hochschild suggested two main worker responses. In surface acting, workers avoid the authentic expression of their emotions leading, it is argued, to a sense of dissonance that can potentially lead to stress and burnout. In deep acting, a process comparable to empathising, workers attempt to match their internal and
external responses. This approach is seen as less likely to lead to burnout as it
minimises the tension of dissonance and feeds a sense of accomplishment
(Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002). Hochschild called the deep acting endeavour
‘emotion work’.

Teachers are argued to be prone to burnout as they need to constantly manage
their displays of emotion as well as the emotions of their students (Brackett et al,
2010). They are argued to experience intense, emotionally-laden interactions on a
daily basis and face greater emotional demands than most other occupational
groups (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002). An international review found evidence
of burnout in full-time university staff comparable with other service sector
employees such as schoolteachers and healthcare professionals (Watts and
Robertson, 2011). In particular, teaching large volumes of students and especially
postgraduates has been linked to burnout in academic staff (Byrne 1991; Pretorius
1994; Lackritz 2004).

The ‘necessary evils’ literature (Molinsky and Margolis, 2005, Margolis and
Molinsky, 2008) helps contextualise the professional gatekeeping aspect of the
role. Necessary evils are:

‘tasks in which a person must knowingly and intentionally cause emotional or
physical harm to another human being in the service of achieving some
perceived greater good or purpose’ (Margolis and Molinsky, 2008, p.847).

Failing counselling students would seem to fit well into this category, resting as it
does on notions of protecting clients and professional standards. To undertake
such tasks effectively staff need to utilise sensitivity and compassion in order to
protect the individual’s welfare and dignity, reduce the possibility of negative
reactions and preserve the reputation of the organisation (e.g. Brockner, 2002,
Dutton et al, 2006). However, such actions tend to elicit strong emotions and
reactions in the doer (Molinsky and Margolis, 2005, Brockner, 2006). These can
include guilt, shame and distress (Grant et al, 2009). Incongruence can result as
differing self-concepts or configurations of self (Mearns, 1999) come into
conflict. The prosocial identity, or ‘the dimension of the self-concept focused on
helping and benefiting others’ (Grant et al, 2009, p.321) may be brought into conflict with the identity of the responsible professional who undertakes tough but fair decisions. ‘Either way, the resulting dissonance can interfere with performers’ ability to produce interpersonally sensitive behaviour.’ (Margolis and Molinsky, 2008, p.847-848)

The conventional view is that the inherently stressful nature of such activity leads individuals to respond to such situations by psychologically disengaging, (e.g. Maslach, 1982; Leiter and Maslach, 1988; Bandura, 1990; Clair and Dufresne, 2004). The connection between disengagement and insensitive behaviour has been well-established (Margolis and Molinsky, 2008). However, the literature on emotional labour suggests that sensitive behaviour is possible via surface or deep acting (Hochschild, 1979, 1983). Margolis and Molinsky’s (2008) study of four occupational groups who undertook ‘necessary evils’ – managers, doctors, police officers and addiction counsellors - found a combination of surface and deep acting. Reflecting Brotheridge and Grandey (2002), they found deep acting helpful in forestalling, rather than precipitating, burnout.

2.5.4 The variables of age and gender

Age and gender may well be relevant given the largely female middle-aged profile of the trainer body (Hill, 2002). Although national differences in stress patterns (Winefield, 2000) make generalisations problematic, much of the research within universities undertaken internationally suggests that women experience higher levels of work-related stress (e.g. Thompson and Dey, 1998). One explanation is differential exposure to stressors (Day and Livingstone, 2003). Female academics, for example, undertake a greater amount of student contact (Thomas & Davies, 2002); they tend to juggle multiple roles at work and at home depleting their emotional reserves and compounding stress levels (Blix et al, 1994; Hogan et al, 2002). The alternative, more general explanation is that men and women react to stressors differently. When faced with identical stressors, women tend to perceive them as being more stressful than men (Day & Livingstone, 2003). Studies have demonstrated little difference between gender in overall propensity to burnout, although within those parameters women may tend to be more emotionally
exhausted and men to be more depersonalized (Purvanova and Muros, 2010). Depersonalisation scores are arguably lower in women because a distant, indifferent professional persona conflicts with the norm of the caring sensitive female, leading women to work harder to maintain an empathic manner (Bilge, 2006).

The age profile of counsellor trainers leads potentially to differing conclusions re propensity to stress. Age is generally considered to be an important moderator of stress (Jex, 1998). Research within a large American university found older university staff members reported lower stress levels than younger staff members (Hogan et al, 2002). Age is a predictive factor of burnout in university staff (Watts and Robertson, 2011). Younger university staff members are more vulnerable to burnout, demonstrating greater emotional exhaustion scores (Byrne 1991; Lackritz 2004; Ghorpade et al, 2007). Such findings may reflect older staff having developed more efficient coping mechanisms and thus protective strategies; alternatively, junior staff may have more student contact hours and a consequent higher interpersonal workload (Watts and Robertson, 2011). Interestingly, Orlinsky and Rønnestad’s (2005) study brought together age and gender, and found that young male therapists were at greater risk of distressing practice.
2.6 THE WORLD OF HIGHER EDUCATION

In this section I return to the significance of setting, this time in relation to the educational environment for counselling training. This initial section examines literature relating to the so-called ‘commodification of education’ which can be argued to be of relevance to all the ensuing discussion. I then turn to wider debate about teaching and learning that has shaped recent educational discourse.

2.6.1 Commodification of education

Universities have been predominantly associated with cultural norms and practices antithetical to market principles and cultures (Bourdieu, 1988; Naidoo et al, 2011). In the latter stages of the twentieth century there developed an international drive to introduce more business-like accountabilities and results-oriented management styles into all kinds of public sector organisations (Hood, 1991). Britain was the first area in Europe to adopt quasi-market mechanisms and consumerist discourses (Naidoo et al, 2011). The resulting ‘new managerialism’ focused on applying market-related ideas such as economic feasibility, consumer choice, marketability, accountability and competitive status (Loewenthal, 2002). The rise of a consumerist culture within higher education, begun under Thatcher in the 1980s, was continued under New Labour in the 1990s, as they strove to further open up access to higher education, maintain quality standards, and produce graduates equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to ensure Britain’s economic competitiveness (Naidoo and Jamieson, 2005).

The consumerist turn has been accompanied by a growing discourse of distrust of professional groups in the public sector, who have been positioned as self-serving resisters of change (Naidoo et al, 2011). Consumerist levers to increase control and enhance student choice were either introduced or strengthened from the 1990s. These included: modularization of the curriculum; the assignment of uniform levels and credits to courses to facilitate choice; the requirement to publish detailed information on academic programmes; the publication of performance indicators evaluating institutional functioning; the elaboration and institutionalization of complaints and redress mechanisms (Naidoo and Jamieson,

These developments all characterise the ‘commodification of higher education’, a process foreshadowed in the work of Lyotard (1979) in his characterisation of the postmodern age. Indeed, Usher et al (1997) depicted education’s new market-consumer orientation as a postmodern phenomenon. The assumption was that consumerist forces would impact on the professional practices of academic staff, with a resultant higher quality of teaching provision (Naidoo et al, 2011). Lecturers and students became conceptualised as commodity producers and consumers respectively (Naidoo and Jamieson, 2005). As Edwards (1994) pointed out, when students are positioned as consumers, their demands may be experienced by providers as difficult to cope with. Bourdieu (1988) talked of habitus, or the ways of being and doing that form the norms within a field of practice. As Usher et al (1997) argued, many educational practitioners have felt uncomfortable and/or at odds with the new habitus in the educational field. They pointed to a sense of crisis among liberal adult educators fuelled by a sense of loss of learning for its own sake, superseded by the ‘intrusion of vocational and instrumental goals (p.11).

To again use Bourdieu’s (1988) conceptualisation, there has been a decline in the importance of academic capital, traditionally connected with intellectual and cultural assets rather than economic or political ones. Naidoo and Jamieson (2005) depict the introduction of market forces into higher education as leading to the erosion of academic capital and the valorisation of economic capital. Academic success has become increasingly measured in terms of income generation, levels of recruitment, involvement with commercial interests and creation of financial surpluses (Naidoo et al, 2011). While universities with the largest ‘reserves’ of academic capital are best positioned to resist such forces (for example, Oxford and Cambridge universities) such institutions are not in a position to resist such forces indefinitely (Naidoo et al, 2011). It is within such an arena that the following debate needs to be contextualised.
2.6.2 Teaching and learning - paradigmatical shifts

Counsellor training can also be posited within the context of shifting understandings of what constitutes ‘education’. The twentieth century witnessed an increased questioning of traditional pedagogic methods, with the educational discourse shifting from a focus on teaching to one of the facilitation of learning (LSIS, 2011).

Certain developments were key to this. Central was the work of Piaget (e.g. 1932, 1952, 1954), described as the ‘great pioneer of the constructivist theory of knowing’ (Glaserfeld, 1990, p.22). Steele (2005) talked of key constructivist principles as including: focusing learning on students’ existing knowledge base; relating learning to ‘real-life’ situations; focusing on key ideas and their interrelationships. The growing influence of progressive educators was both resultant of and contributive to shifting educational norms. The American educationalist, John Dewey had been a foundational figure, arguing that students should be actively engaged in socially relevant learning processes that would prepare them for participation in a democratic society (Dewey, 1899, 1916). In Britain, A.S. Neill pioneered schooling aimed at the emotional and creative as well as the intellectual development of the individual, with schools run as far as possible according to democratic principles (Neill, 1960). A radical alternative vision of education was contained in the work of Freire (1972), who argued for a system based on equality and mutuality in the learning process, focused on the examination of socially relevant material and aimed at the empowerment or ‘conscientization’ of students. Carl Rogers was influential also in educational developments outside the counsellor training field. His ideas paralleled the more individualistic side of progressive education (Feinberg and Feinberg, 2001) and were elaborated through a number of texts (1951, 1969b, 1983). He allied himself firmly with a holistic approach to education, the facilitation of learning rather than teaching, the importance of the relationship between student and facilitator in promoting that learning, student freedom in curriculum choice, and personalised, experiential learning.
Other important figures were Vgotsky (1986), Knowles (1970) and, particularly, Kolb (1971, 1984, 2000), who developed and popularised the whole concept of experiential learning. He described it as a holistic integrative approach to learning which combined experience, perception, cognition and behaviour, with knowledge acquisition resulting ‘from the combination of grasping and transforming experience’ (1984, p. 41). Kolb’s learning cycle, based around stages of concrete experiencing, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation, became a staple of learning theory.

Large elements of counsellor training can most easily be connected with the work of the progressive educators of the second part of the twentieth century, most notably Rogers. However, educational discourse continued to shift further from the 1990s on the back of the perceived need to boost competitiveness in the new global market (Illeris, 2009). Furthermore postmodernism was leading not only to an emphasis on students as consumers but as learners within social and cultural environments (Usher et al, 1997). One influential development, for instance, was the ‘communities of practice’ model which emphasised the social and situated nature of learning (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The current picture is a complex one:

‘…whereas learning traditionally has been understood mainly as an acquisition of knowledge and skills, today the concept covers a much larger field that includes emotional, social and societal dimensions.’ (Illeris, 2009, p.1)

Illeris (ibid) saw competence development as one strand within this, connected with ‘the ability to manage different existing and future challenges in working life’ (p.1). It can be sited within the postmodernist rise of the boundaryless career based on marketability and individual career choices. The competence movement or the drive for competence-based education and training (CBET) can be viewed as part of a backlash against more progressive developments and, by extension, the approaches to teaching and learning that potentially underpin counsellor training (Rivers et al, 1997). Advocates reacted against education’s perceived failure to prepare individuals for the world of work. It can also be viewed within the context of the continuing influence of more traditional approaches, such as
neo-behaviourism, which had gained a foothold in educational practice in the twentieth century (Brown, 2004). One indication was the continuing significance accorded to taxonomies of educational objectives, based as they are on a reification of learning processes into a set of measurable learning outcomes. Moreover, such views of education’s purpose also fitted with the new managerialism within the university sector. Notions of measurable outcomes are now at the core of British educational practices in course design and programme specifications, as well as forming the basis for quality control policies and procedures (Brown, 2004).
2.7 PROFESSIONS AND PROFESSIONALISATION

The final section of this review focuses on the literature surrounding the professions and professionalisation. At a macro level, the modern counselling training sector can be argued to have developed out of a long-term professionalisation process. It can moreover be viewed as a key agent in the process given the importance of the ownership of a developed body of knowledge and expertise to any group’s claim to professional status (see section 2.7.1 for further discussion). On a more micro level, a new phase of professionalisation has been argued to be occurring (Davies, 2009), impacting on training and the experience of trainers, and hence on the trainers in this research project.

2.7.1 Defining a profession

Differing and contradictory meanings are attached to notions of professionalism. Everyday usages include notions of: being paid; conducting jobs in a proper, efficient manner; behaving in an ethical and moral manner; applying sound and informed judgment (Abbott and Meerabeau, 1998). Fournier (1999) talked of the casual generalisation of the term with it becoming used as a marketing device to sell the services of occupational groups as diverse as restaurant workers and security staff.

The question of definition was a focus of sociological debate up to the 1960s. The so-called ‘traits’ approach focussed on of a set of criteria or an ideal type against which an occupation could be measured (Abbott and Meerabeau, 1998). Flexner (1915/2001) focused on the centrality of learnedness to notions of professionalism and argued for only three uncontested ‘learned’ professions—law, medicine and ‘preaching’. The possession of a body of knowledge, a membership with specialised skills and competence in applying this knowledge, and a code of ethics focused on service to the client came to be seen as defining professional characteristics (Goode, 1960). On a similar vein Hugman (1998) summarised commonly accepted traits as: a distinct knowledge base; esoteric skills; occupational control over qualification; ethical codes; high social status; a corporate body or association. Hierarchy is both implicit and explicit in Carr-
Saunders (1955) influential class-like professional categorisation of ‘established’ professions, ‘new’ professions, ‘semi-professions’ and ‘would-be’ professions. While the practice of the established professions is informed by theoretical study and moral codes of behaviour, that of the semi-professions is based on the acquisition of technical skills. A traits approach is still evident in discourse surrounding the professions. Yam for instance, was still arguing in 2004 that professional recognition required possession of ‘certain traits’ (p.978).

2.7.2 Professionalisation purposes and strategies

The traits approach coexisted with the dominant structuralist functionalist approach which emphasised the positive function performed by professions, seeing them as embodying the core values of civilised society (MacDonald, 1995). However, a much more critical stance towards the professions accompanied the rise of post-functionalist perspectives from the 1960s. Self-interest rather than societal interest was argued as the dominant professional motivation (McDonald, 1994; Abbott and Meerabeau, 1998). The exclusive nature of professional knowledge rather than its public utility was highlighted (Larson, 1990). On a radical note, Illich (1977) accused the professions of assuming a level of sapiential, moral and charismatic authority that disabled the individual’s capacity for self-care.

Attention shifted from defining professions towards examining professionalising strategies, or the steps taken by occupational groups to attain professional status. Some key influential figures were Freidson (1970a, 1970b, 1986, 1994, 2001), Larson (1977, 1983, 1990, 1993) and Abbott (1988). Friedson’s concept of the professional project focused on how occupational groups seek to gain ‘organised autonomy’ or a state-backed mandate to control their own work. Larson linked individual aspiration with collective action, viewing professionalisation as a drive for collective mobility. She depicted professions as having successfully deployed market strategies to gain dominance over areas of social concern. Abbott (1988) brought the notion of jurisdiction to the fore. Professions, he argued, develop powerful councils which define the profession, control access to it and police its
standards. He talked in terms of a system of the professions and inter-professional competition as fundamental to professional life.

Feminist work added the dimension of gender to sociological debate. The gendered nature of Carrs-Saunders’ professional classification system was identified, with the established professions staffed by men and the semi-professions by women (Hearn, 1982). Strategies to exclude women from professional areas were highlighted. Crompton (1987) describes the process of credentialising as overlaid with gender exclusion. Witz (1990) saw the professional project as embedded in patriarchal structures. Hearn (1982) argued that capitalism created a duality of rationality and emotionalism, with a consequent need to exert control over emotionality. The development of the professions in areas concerned with reproductive and emotional life, previously dominated by women, thus became the target for male domination through the professions.

2.7.3 Professionalisation and counselling in Great Britain

Some commentators (e.g. Dryden et al, 2000; Bondi, 2005; Hansen, 2010) see professionalisation as in an advanced state within British counselling. Others argue that the professionalisation process is far from complete. Howard (1998), for example, pointed to its failure to meet three criteria for professional behaviour: clarity about a body of knowledge and skill; clarity about the results of professional intervention; a better result than an amateur. A number of commentators across time and from differing viewpoints, both historical and philosophical, have argued its lack of a distinct, discrete identity and ownership (e.g. Holmes and Lindley, 1989; Mahler, 1995; Hogan, 2003, Miller, 2008).

It is difficult to gauge the extent of support for state regulation. Campaign groups (e.g. the pro-regulation group Integrity and the Alliance for Counselling & Psychotherapy against State Regulation) by their very nature promulgated particular viewpoints. For example, Integrity pointed to only 3,000 signatories to a petition against regulation out of an estimated total of 60,000 practitioners in the field (Scott, 2011). A recent piece of research (McGivern et al, 2009) provides
some insight. This small-scale study found counsellors and psychotherapists working in the N.H.S. to be focused on the more negative aspects of regulation in practice. Independent therapists’ views were more mixed, although those who had trained more recently were more optimistic than their more experienced colleagues who, similar to the N.H.S. therapists, were concerned about modes of therapy “losing their essence”.

The debate around professionalisation and regulation has been played out in the literature although it can be argued that it is the anti-regulation faction which has mounted the most high-profile literary campaign. Key ‘anti’ texts have included Mowbray (1995), House and Totton (1997), Bates and House (2003), Postle (2007) and Parker and Revelli (2008). Feltham (2010) provides an elegant summary of pro-regulation arguments, which include its natural and inevitable nature, its importance in guaranteeing standards and improving quality, its bringing in of accountability and measures for public protection, as well as its boost to employment. ‘On the face of it, such a presentation is hard to refute; why would we not want to endorse all that’ (p.102).

Critics’ counter-arguments resonate with post-functionalist sociological critiques of the professions as well as those marshalled by opponents to professionalising processes within other affected occupational sectors such as nursing. They also reflect anti-regulation arguments put forward in the U.S. (Alberding et al, 1993). Mowbray (1995), for instance, referred to a 1970’s U.S. review of the impact of regulation across a range of groups and organisations which concluded that the ‘effect is almost always to enhance the position of the industry or licensed occupation at the expense of the public at large’ (Pfeffer, 1974, p.478). Higher costs to the public are argued to follow from the restriction of access to the profession and the higher salaries commanded by professional groups. It is contested that therapy is not a high risk activity for clients (Mowbray, 1995); moreover, regulation fails in its efforts to protect the public (e.g. Hogan, 2003; Postle, 2007; Litten, 2008). Mowbray (1999) argued that regulation restricts supply by introducing higher than necessary entry requirements, stifles innovation in the training of practitioners, and restricts access to training on economic and social grounds. He pointed out that outcome research shows that personal qualities
of practitioners are important rather than knowledge of theory and technique - large components of university-based training programmes. On a final pertinent note, Mowbray (1995) depicts regulatory moves as led by the self-interest of the ‘training business’, although exactly to whom this pejorative term is applied is not made explicitly clear.

2.7.4 Professionalisation: a comparison

Nursing’s professionalising project provides a point of comparison for counselling. Nursing is regarded as a semi-profession and gaining professional status has been a long and difficult process (Adams, 2011). Difficulties originate from a number of areas: the lack of legal protection for its title; the absence of a definition of practice; the lower status attached to the skills and knowledge base of individuals who practise in areas seen as based on ‘natural’ ability; the unpaid domestic nature of most nursing activity (Acker, 1989). Its largely female workforce is also problematic, as when occupational groups are feminised they tend to attract poorer financial rewards and lower status (Abbott and Wallace, 1998). Connections with vocation are not seen as helpful (White, 2002). To add to the obstacles, nursing enjoys limited autonomy, identified as one of the key professional attributes (Freidson 2001). Its practice is directed by external sources, influenced by the government (Adams, 2011) and has a history of subordination to the medical profession (Davies, 1995; Meerabeau, 2001). The Victorian legacy of apprenticeship within nursing has also been cited as unhelpful (Meerabeau, 2001).

The professionalising camp within nursing gained ascendancy in nurse education and at national level (Mackay, 1998). It saw the professionalising project as in part dependent on nurse training becoming situated within Higher Education. This was accomplished with the implementation of Project 2000 (Mackay, 1998). However, divisions are evident in rank-and-file attitudes. Although a minority of nurses specifically identify themselves as vocationally-orientated (Francis at et al, 1992), reaction to professionalising moves are evident in the rejection of the academic and of ‘clever’ nurses, and the considerable antipathy expressed to the Project 2000 proposals (Mackay,
1998). Some nurses express ambivalence about the need for academic and professional development, preferring to remain in direct patient care (Yam, 2004). McGrath’s 2006 qualitative study found a passionate commitment rooted in a concern for the welfare of others in the nurses she interviewed. Moreover, as previously cited, ideas redolent of vocation continue to be embedded in the attitudes and practices of nurses (Mackay, 1998).

**2.7.5 The experience of nurse educators**

The experience of nurse educators holds strong parallels with that of counsellor trainers. Healthcare programmes are staff intensive due to the skills based nature of the curricula, high contact hours (H.P.C., 2005) and the demand for professional competence on graduation (H.P.C., 2005; N.M.C., 2004a, 2004b). All programmes require the inclusion of practice placements for students. The demands on academic staff are similarly substantial. They are required to deliver complex curricula and undertake the related managerial and administrative responsibilities. They are expected to actively engage in research, research output being a priority in many higher education institutions since the introduction of the Research Assessment Exercise (R.A.E.) in 1986 (Roberts, 2003). They also face demands from the H.P.C. and Nursing and Midwifery Council (N.M.C.) to maintain clinical practice and professional currency (H.P.C., 2005; N.M.C., 2008). Their roles involve boundary-crossing between academic practice in university contexts and clinical practice in healthcare settings (Boyd and Smith, 2011). Combining the roles of nurse and teacher may occasion a role crisis with nurse educators unable to prove their professional ability in nursing or establish their professional position as a teacher (Adams, 2011).

There has been some research undertaken into the nurse educator experience. Small-scale studies have focused on the experiences of recently appointed university lecturers in nursing (Diekelmann, 2004; McArthur-Rouse, 2008; Boyd & Lawley, 2009). In Diekelmann (2004) nurse educators reported limited support and a sense of isolation and alienation. In both Diekelmann (ibid) and McArthur-Rouse (2008) tutors reported a lack of perceived clarity and understanding concerning their role. In Boyd and Lawley (2009) new nurse educators generally
found the transition to higher education challenging and confusing, encouraging them to hold on to existing practitioner identities rather than embrace new identities as academics.

Two larger scale studies focused on lecturers cross a range of health professional fields, one focusing on those with five years or less experience, the second on more experienced teaching staff (Boyd et al., 2009; Boyd and Smith, 2011; Smith and Boyd, 2012). The findings of these larger surveys were more optimistic. In the survey of less experienced staff, they all had found the transition into H.E. challenging but the majority had experienced it overall as a positive one. Generally staff felt well-supported by formal and informal networks. They reported enjoyment and satisfaction in teaching and witnessing student development. They identified themselves as enjoying a greater level of autonomy than in their previous roles. On the less positive side, nurse educators in particular felt they had lost status. Some reported stress symptoms. All pointed to the difficulty of meeting the role’s demands. These included: shortage of time for research and scholarly activity; long working hours; staying professionally current; problems in maintaining a good work-life balance; lack of clarity concerning the expectations of the role; needing to learn university language and systems. Self-management was a key theme. Similar responses are evident in the preliminary findings of the survey of more experienced lecturers (Boyd and Smith, 2011)

2.8 A PRÉCIS

The literature from the 1990s pointed to the complex, demanding, stressful but rewarding nature of the role. Since that time the shifting contexts for training have included: professionalisation moves in the form of state regulation (which has now receded to one of enhanced voluntary regulation); the rise of evidence-based practice; shifting educational discourses; the commodification of higher education; consumerism and new managerialism within educational establishments; the rise of competence-based assessment systems. All have
potentially impacted on the trainer experience. The world of work has also shifted with a concomitant loss of job security, evident in higher education as elsewhere. Under the weight of such changes, reported stress levels are on the rise, particularly within the educational sector.

The voices of trainers have remained relatively silent in this upheaval. There has been a lack of representation of rank-and-file trainers’ voices in the published literature. This general silence may represent pragmatism, agreement, undecidedness, a sense of powerlessness or simply the lack of an effective representative voice – it is difficult to gauge. While research initiatives have turned to look at the effectiveness of training processes and valuable insight is starting to be gained from trainees, there is a startling hole in terms of research into whether tutors are capable of carrying out their current role, never mind an envisaged one. The lack of research may reflect the difficulties of trainers finding time to research in a time-pressured environment. Alternatively, the lack of published research may represent a focus on concern on the quality of the product, the view of the consumer rather than the producer in an age of the commodification of education. Whatever the reason, there is a significant gap. Research and understanding from the field of vocational psychology is helpful in gaining an understanding of how forces may act on the experience of the role, as well as experience within related occupations. Understandings from the field of professional education can help inform how trainers may understand their role. At the same time, this research aims to supplement research across all these fields as well as remedy an important deficiency in current training discourse.
CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

All in the golden afternoon
full leisurely we glide
for both our oars, with little skill, by little arms are plied,
while little hands make vain pretence
our wanderings to guide
Lewis Carroll, 1896

The world of research has been likened to Lewis Carroll’s Wonderland (e.g. Unger, 1983; Boyd, 2008). The poem above prefaces Carroll’s (1896) ‘Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass’ and captures my sense of the scale and difficulty of the researcher’s task. It also resonates with my sense of ‘littleness’ in terms of the broad philosophical sweeps that have surrounded not only the general research endeavour but my existence within the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The theme of our historical, geographical, cultural and social ‘situatedness’ is one that I will return to as a central influence on my paradigmatic stance and one that helps explain my focus on the importance of the researcher’s reflexivity.

Crotty (1998) argues that the initial stages of the research journey require the researcher to put considerable effort into answering two questions. One centres on how he/she will undertake the research, the methods and methodology; the other concerns how those decisions will be justified. Research arises out of ‘a real-life issue that needs to be addressed, a problem that needs to be resolved, a question that needs to be answered’ (p.13). Others argue that the research process from the choice of topic onwards [my emphasis] stems from an a priori commitment to a view of research (Hart, 1998; Cresswell, 2007). I am aware of straddling both viewpoints. I started from a personal question that I wished to answer and an awareness that the question was framed by my view of what constitutes meaningful research. The research approach also needed to be congruent with my person as the researcher. I echo Etherington (2004, p.71):
‘When setting out on any research journey I need to find ways of working that fit with who I am: my underlying values, philosophies on life, my views of reality and my beliefs about how knowledge is known and created.’

It seems apt therefore that reflexivity is the starting-point for the tracing of my research journey.

### 3.1 THE STARTING POINT: REFLEXIVITY

‘... each person is an absolute choice of self from the standpoint of a world of knowledges and of techniques which this choice illumines; each person is an absolute upsurge at an absolute date and is perfectly unthinkable at another date’


*Well, he would [say that], wouldn’t he*

Mandy Rice-Davies (1963).

Reflexivity has become an increasingly recognised, if not universally accepted feature of present-day social science research. The concept has attracted a range of differing meanings and emphases, and the plural ‘reflexivities’ has been argued as a more appropriate descriptor (Etherington, 2004). Wilkinson (1988) provides a useful distinction between on the one hand ‘personal’ and ‘functional’ reflexivity focusing on the identity of the researcher and the form/function of the research, and ‘disciplinary’ reflexivity, which entails analysis of the nature and influence of the field of enquiry. This section explicitly focuses on personal reflexivity, which I regard as crucial to the research project and which, non-coincidentally, is seen as central to the interpretative processes associated with Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis or I.P.A. (Smith et al, 2009).

It is with the personal that many definitions of reflexivity are more easily associated. ‘Reflexivity is the term used for explicit consideration of specific ways in which it is likely that study was influenced by the researcher’ (Yardley, 2008,
Cresswell (2007, p.243) describes it as the researcher’s consciousness of their ‘biases, values, and experiences’. Etherington (2004) associates it with the researcher’s capacity to acknowledge how their own experiences and contexts, including the social and cultural, inform processes and outcomes. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p.242) talk of it as the ‘striving for objectivity about subjectivity’. Such descriptors imply a developed capacity for self-awareness. Indeed, Wilkinson (1998) encapsulates its meaning as ‘disciplined self-reflection’. McLeod (2001) talks of reflexivity as a continuous process of the researcher ‘turning back’ awareness on him/herself. Guba and Lincoln (2008, p.278) emphasise its heuristic nature, portraying it as ‘a conscious experiencing of the self as both inquirer and respondent, as teacher and learner, as the one coming to know the self within the processes of research itself’. Such understandings connect with the notion of indexical awareness, an awareness that ‘points back to the one who is aware’ (Tallis, 2010, p.28). It is not a ‘one-off’ process. Interaction with research material may continually spark insight into previously unrecognised assumptions or fore-projections (Gadamer, 2004/1960).

The rise of reflexivity’s significance can be matched to the paradigmatic shifts that accompanied the social, economic and cultural developments of the twentieth century. Etherington (2004, p.31) contextualises her adoption of reflexivity within ‘a complex mix of cultural and social changes … and philosophical critique’. Her identified influences are similar to mine. We both cite feminism. She cites Gadamer and Heidegger: I cite Existentialism. I would add to this the impact of my work as counsellor and counselling supervisor: the willingness and facility to reflect on self is fundamental to my practice and its development.

As I will pursue in greater depth later in this section, I believe in the interconnection between the researcher and the researched. The ‘in-ness’ of myself as researcher has particular nuances within this study. This research has been conducted and thesis produced within my role as trainer. My experience of the training role has shifted throughout, impacted on by institutional pressures, ‘professional’ shifts, course issues, staff relationships, personal factors and, crucially, engagement and immersion in the research process itself. Alongside this, conducting the research has impacted on my understandings of my training
role and I have taken these shifting meanings back with me into the on-going research process. Conversely, my role as trainer has also sat within the research process in a very evident and public way. Research participants have interacted with me as trainer-researcher, as have I with them.

Further enmeshment comes with supervision: I am supervised by a colleague involved in counselling training and I interact with his understandings of the training process. I will be examined within the institution I train in by examiners likely to carry their own experiences and understandings into the examination process. My involvement is complex and I will attempt to communicate it as fully as I am able, bearing in mind my inevitably limited insight. I neither possess nor think it possible to have a ‘God’s-eye view’ (Merleau-Ponty, 1962/1945) or a ‘view from no one’ (Tallis, 2010, p.128).

I include here an immediate and apposite example from my journal of my sense of the impact of my research activity on my work as trainer

10 November 2010
After I had spoken about it with [my supervisor], I added an extra section to the reflexivity section re the extent of my enmeshment. It stayed with me and I took it into the training the next day. In an exercise, I … talked of my research and about my feelings around personal disclosure as a trainer. Talked of how I saw it as essential to the role – how can I talk of my commitment to I–Thou relationships in counselling and have I–It relationships in training? How can I ask trainees to risk and share but make myself an honourable exception? …And immediately feeling I had misjudged, feeling exposed and vulnerable and as if somehow immersion in the research had played into the decision to reveal.

As Wilkinson (1988) argues, a fully reflexive analysis looks not only at how life experience influences research, but also at how research feeds back into life experience, at how I am a ‘touched toucher, a seen seer’ (Tallis, 2010, p.28). As far as I am able and as I deem appropriate, I weave my reflections throughout the thesis in order to depict the on-going nature of the reflexive process. However, I
reserve a fuller discussion of my experiencing of being a ‘touched toucher, a seen seer’ (ibid) until chapter seven.

3.2 METHODOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

Unger (1983) puts forward 4 questions pertinent to research into human experience:

1. What is the nature of the human being we study?
2. How do the constraints of methodology influence what we see as human nature?
3. What is the impact of our ideology, values, and social identity on our methods and interpretation?
4. In turn, how do our methods create our beliefs?

Unger argues that methodological questions are at heart epistemological questions; that researchers are of necessity engaged in an inquiry into the nature of truth, the answer(s) to which determine the nature of their research and its findings. Research paradigms are sets of world views constructed around a collection of first principles and ultimates (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008) or phenomenological objectified states of thought (Benner, 1994). Lincoln and Guba (2000) point to seven critical issues confronted by paradigms: ethics and values; fit between paradigms; researcher actions; power and control; the foundations of truth; validity; reflexivity and representation. These challenges operate not just at the paradigmatic level but also at the level of the individual researcher. I shall frame my depiction of my methodological decision-making process with reference to such questions and issues.
3.3 CONSIDERING A QUANTITATIVE APPROACH

Quantitative approaches are generally associated with positivism, which is linked with modernist notions of a knowable world, the existence of universal properties and the progressive nature of research (Gergen, 1992). High quality research and the application of scientific method, associated with a positivist evidence-based epistemology, have come in large measure to be seen as synonymous. ‘Scientism’, a term first coined in the late nineteenth century to describe the growing status of science, has enjoyed a recent resurgence. In Britain, it has become enshrined in the powerful evidence-based practice movement. As Crotty (1998) argues, what it promises is unambiguous and accurate knowledge of the world and fits well with Kvale and Brinkmann’s (2009) metaphor of research as the mining of the ‘knowledge nuggets’.

The differing traditions need to be appreciated for what they are rather than what they lack (Hart, 1998). Flyvbjerg (2001, 2006) talks of the need to move beyond the paradigm wars. Positivist research has contributed hugely to developments in the physical sciences and technology (Dallos and Vetere, 2005). Moreover, a measure has utility. As McLeod (2001, p.13) argues, ‘verificationist research is an effective strategy for building legitimacy’. A significant way that I gauged and demonstrated the usefulness of the counselling service I managed was via the number who used it. If I drilled further into the statistics, I could look at which subject areas dominated, the social and cultural make-up of the client-base and so forth. I have heard counsellors allying themselves with evidence-based practice on the basis of its political utility, on its capacity to demonstrate effectiveness in terms valued by and accessible to the potential customer or service commissioner.

My rejection of a positivist, quantitative methodology for this study stemmed in part from pragmatic considerations. Pragmatism elevates practice over theory; it focuses on ‘what works’ and on providing answers to problems (Patton, 1990). In research this converts into an emphasis on utility and applicability, on the adoption of the most appropriate methods for the field of inquiry, and commonly with the application of multiple methods (Cresswell, 2007). My research was not motivated by verificationist impulses. It was stimulated by my experiences as a
trainers and a desire to construct meaning around these experiences, a desire which does not tally with a quantitative methodology. Moreover, I could not be an objective researcher applying standardised measures and instruments. My research could not be context-independent. I was to be researching a context within which I was deeply embedded. Moreover, I was interested in the nature of the individual experience, in hearing how individual trainers might describe their experiences and attach meaning to them. I was interested in co-constructing rich pictures of individual experience, not in the construction of generalised and generalisable accounts.

Another factor in my decision-making was my rejection of objectivism as a basis for either understanding human nature or researching human beings. A determinist cause-and-effect model cannot sufficiently embrace notions of the role of human agency, in all its vagaries, in human affairs (e.g. Charmaz, 2006, 2008a). The world as perceived through scientific ‘lenses’ is a world of regularities, constancies, uniformities and principles as against the ‘uncertain, ambiguous, idiosyncratic, changeful world we know at first hand’ (Crotty, 1998, p.28). Additionally, objectivism asserts that meanings are contained within objects, and hence objective truths or a God’s eye view (Putnam, 1981) are open to discovery by researchers. No place here for the constructionist model of truth emerging out of a process of engagement and construction, or of ‘facts’ as social constructions arising out of particular contexts (Silverman, 2010). Perhaps here I am inevitably influenced by my time in place and society. The twentieth century has been the setting for the rise of post-modern, constructivist ideas accentuating the creation rather than the discovery of personal and social realities (Sexton, 1997).

A final, crucial consideration related to the values and beliefs that underpin my approach to counselling. My approach to counselling is founded on the belief in the importance of relationship and I wished to incorporate such a relational approach into the research process. I desire to form respectful and empathic ‘I-Thou’ rather than objectifying ‘I-It’ research relationships (Buber, 1970, 2002). As Spinelli (2007) says, the ‘I-Thou’ attitude is rooted in inseparable relatedness.
and is antithetical to the adoption of a positivist quantitative approach to research with persons.

3.4 NAVIGATING THE QUALITATIVE FIELD

By Grand Central Station I sat down and wept
Elizabeth Smart, 1945

The qualitative field is not a homogeneous entity; its hallmark is complexity (Smith, 2008). Qualitative research is surrounded by a perplexing interconnection of terms, concepts and assumptions. Practitioners are informed by differing paradigmatic bases; individual paradigms, moreover, attract different emphases and understandings. It does not privilege a single methodological practice: neither does it have ownership of a distinct set of methods and practices. Moreover, separate and multiple uses and meanings are applied to the methods that are employed (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008).

Cresswell’s (2007) allusion to the difficulty of making an informed choice helps contextualise my experiencing. This extract from my journal helps illustrate its intensity:

25 February 2011
Crisis week. Writing part of the methodology and absolutely paralysed by a sense of ineptitude. Wanted to cry. Went into work and talked and talked to xxxx who reassured me and I felt part of the intensity of the feelings subside. We talked of that sense of not carrying a sense of entitlement, both working class backgrounds, mature students. … Sense of lack of an authoritative grasp…

Interestingly, I was helped by attending to the sources of my feelings within the context of relationship and dialogue. I was also helped by a contextualising of my responses within the social and the cultural. As a woman from a working-class background who entered higher education as a mature student, I had spent my
adult life expecting to be exposed as an academic imposter, an illegitimate parvenu. So far, I had ‘got away with it’: the PhD, however, was to prove my downfall. My distress was rooted in self-judgment, in the abiding power of social class to shape the way we judge ourselves and others (e.g. Ballinger and Wright, 2007; Balmforth, 2008; Ballinger, 2010).

Utilising cognition was my answer. To help me navigate the complexity of the qualitative inquiry field, I found it important to identify its uniting characteristics. Firstly, it is part of the social science endeavour to analyse and understand social processes and conduct (Vidich and Lyman, 1994). McLeod (2001) defines its primary aim as the development of ‘an understanding of how [my emphasis] the world is constructed’ (p.2). He situates its rise within the loss of assigned and predictable social roles and identities that accompanied urbanisation, industrialisation and secularisation from the 18th century. It can be viewed as one response to the desire to ‘know how to be’ in a world of increasing ‘unknowableness’ (McLeod, 2001). The answers that emerge, however, carry none of the certainties attached to objectivist and positivist paradigms. A second characteristic of qualitative inquiry is the multiplicity of realities that are recognised. ‘Knowledge’ and ‘understanding’ are seen as constructed rather than discovered, partial rather than absolute, temporary rather than permanent, localised rather than general (McLeod, 2001). Knowledge is context-dependent (Flyvbjerg, 2001, 2006).

A third crucial characteristic is the centrality placed on the situated nature of the research process. Qualitative inquiry is ‘a situated activity that locates the observer in the world’ (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008, p.4). Its centre is the worldliness of research. It involves research within natural settings and research methods aimed at depicting moments and meanings in people’s individual lives. It concerns the application of a range of methods and interpretative practices to make the world visible, whilst accepting that these very practices simultaneously change the world (Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). This can translate into research as purposeful social action as exemplified in advocacy/participatory approaches (Cresswell, 2007; Denzin and Lincoln, 2008). It is defined by research as an inductive process, involving researcher immersion in the data and an emergent,
evolving research design (Cresswell, 2007). This characteristic underscores the importance of reflexivity in the qualitative researcher, and helps explain how reflexivity has been depicted as a moral issue (e.g. McLeod, 2001; Etherington, 2004).

A fourth characteristic can be described as eclecticism. This concerns not only methods of data collection or of the positions and properties of the researcher, but of the representative forms of findings. Denzin and Lincoln (2008) argue that a variety of descriptions can be attached to the qualitative researcher: field-worker, journalist, artist, performer, quilter, naturalist among others. Bricoleur is a term they alight on, a ‘kind of professional do-it-yourself’ person (2008, p.5). They argue for a variety of bricoleurs – ‘interpretive, theoretical, political, methodological’ (ibid). A number of metaphors are applied to the research process: montage, quilt making, jazz improvisation, crystals. Such diversity reflects the belief that an objective reality can never be captured; we know a thing only through its representations. Such understandings are conveyed in a more nuanced and complete manner by a richness of representative forms.

The final characteristic in this list, which I would not claim to be exhaustive, returns us back to complexity and relates to its ontological, epistemological, theoretical and axiological underpinnings. While positivism and objectivism can be largely said to underscore quantitative research, there is no such ease of equation in the qualitative field. As McLeod (2001) states, the notion of pluralism is intrinsic to qualitative research, with inquiry characterised by ‘a complex set of competing traditions’ (p.6). Denzin and Lincoln (2008, p.27) talk of the ‘multiple and fractured histories of qualitative research’ and highlight the operation of a mutually-reinforcing relationship between research and ideology over time. They also point out that the earlier historical moments continue to hold influence in the present, either as a legacy or a continuing set of practices, setting the scene for a plurality of approaches.
3.5 CHOOSING BETWEEN DIFFERING METHODOLOGIES

For differing reasons, out of the abundance of choices, three methodological approaches presented themselves as potentially appropriate to my research into the subjective experience of counsellor trainers.

3.5.1 Grounded theory

A prime contender was grounded theory, the ‘market leader’ in qualitative research (McLeod, 2001) with its strong pedigree, developed guidelines and increasingly comprehensive literature. Originally developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), the work of Rennie from the 1980s demonstrated its utility and value to research within the therapeutic field (McLeod, 2001). A distinctive feature of the approach is its explicit emphasis on theory generation or the production of paradigmatic knowledge. Reflecting its origin in the study of social processes, it generates a theory with a particular shape: ‘a central phenomenon, causal conditions, strategies, conditions and context, and consequences’ (Cresswell, 2007, p.68). In pursuit of this aim, it applies theoretical sampling, whereby at some point in the process the aim of sampling shifts towards refinement and saturation of discovered categories rather than the creation of new ones (Willig, 2008).

Grounded theory has developed and evolved over time. One product has been an increasing formalisation of its procedures; another has been its increasing diversification. McLeod (2001) talks of the fragmentation of grounded theory. Cresswell (2007) identifies the emergence of two camps, one more closely associated with the work of Strauss, the second allied with the more constructivist approach of Charmaz (2008a, 2008b). Charmaz places a much greater emphasis on flexibility of procedure, the expression of individual viewpoints and multiple realities, and researcher reflexivity. Rennie and Fergus (2006) argue that inherent contradictions have developed from the incorporation of realism and relativism into the methodology. One result has been a call for the adoption of methodological hermeneutics by grounded theory researchers, incorporating an explicit acceptance of processes such as the double hermeneutic, the bracketing of
biases, expressed researcher reflexivity and vivid texts, alongside a continued emphasis on rigorous procedures and truth claims grounded in the text (Rennie, 2000).

Such acknowledgements and developments bring grounded theory nearer to my position and I recognise the strengths of adopting such an approach. However, I retained a number of reservations, pragmatic and ideological, about adopting it as the methodology for this project. I intended a detailed exploration of individual trainers’ meaning-making of the phenomenon ‘training’. My interest lies in the idiographic not the nomothetic. I was interested in research that produces rich depictions of individual experience; that allows that patterns might emerge but, equally, that they may not. As Ashworth (1996, 2003) argues, the phenomenological psychological epoché sets aside assumptions of an attainable universal structure.

There was also the question of my identity as an insider. Although more constructivist grounded theory approaches recognise the active role of the researcher in the construction of findings, the approach as a whole retains an emphasis on the researcher coming to the process unencumbered by prior theoretical ideas. I could not do so. As Polkinghorne (1992) states, practitioners develop a body of knowledge based on their tacit understandings of human behaviour, theories learnt in training and practice-based experiences. I wanted an approach that more explicitly focused on the interpretative nature of research activity, the inevitability of fore-understandings brought to the research by the researcher and in particular the double hermeneutic of two co-researchers involved in a meaning-making activity. I also wanted an approach that allowed me to reflexively use differing sources of theoretical understandings, albeit with caution, as part of the interpretative process.

3.5.2 Autoethnography

A second potential choice was autoethnography. The term describes both a method and text; the researcher uses tenets of autobiography and ethnography to do and write autoethnography (Etherington, 2004; Ellis et al, 2011). It is ‘an
autobiographical genre of writing and research that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural’ (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p.733). Writing is immediate and personal. It champions narrative, embracing both creativity and immediacy of communication (Meekums, 2008). The writer is involved not only in conveying meaning to others but in a heuristic process of self-learning (e.g. Kiesinger, 2002). Etherington (2004) points to its potential as a healing endeavour for the researcher, helping to bring together mind, body and spirit and facilitate change by bearing witness to experiences that have lain silent.

Many aspects of this approach resonate strongly with me. I believed autoethnography would fully embrace my ‘insider’ status, help my understanding by the telling of my ‘story’, and provide scope to satisfy, indeed, celebrate the creative expression of subjective experience. It is an approach that has been applied to areas close to my research focus, for example, on becoming a counselling trainer (Meekums, 2008) and aspects of the academic life (e.g. Jago, 2002; Holt, 2003; Vickers, 2002; Humphreys, 2005). I have found the reading of such accounts enlightening and rewarding and they have helped to cut through the sense of isolation I feel at times in my role.

The significant factor that weighed against me adopting this approach, however, was the desire to listen to other trainers’ accounts, to set my experiences in a wider context as part of my heuristic process. I can experience myself as ‘drowning in my own material’ (‘Paula’ in Etherington, 2004, p.122). At such times, I am rewarded in reaching out to others:

**14 July 2009**

Do interview with xxxxx… and this starting a train of thought off – somehow feeling clearer about why I can feel so lonely, so misunderstood – so unacceptable at times. And if I try and articulate this in terms of the research – it is about how philosophical difference can be lived personally and emotionally, can play into needs for positive regard, wanting to belong…
Again, my insider status is pertinent: I live the role I am researching. I wished my research to be based on engagement with others, to counteract my sense of isolation. To misquote Stevie Smith (1957), I wished to be ‘waving not drowning’.

3.5.3 What I carried forward

Before turning to I.P.A., my methodological approach of choice, I wish to mark my debts to the approaches I have discussed. From grounded theory, I took the importance of rigorous, systematic, disciplined inquiry. From autoethnography I took forward a reinforced belief in the significance of research as a heuristic and creative process. One such element is the place for self-revelation on the part of the researcher. It reiterated for me the importance of the personal, the subjective and the narrative. Although not my methodology of choice, elements of an autoethnographic approach are incorporated into this study. I reveal myself in this thesis as a contribution to the trustworthiness of this research (Bond, 2004). Importantly, in doing so, I am revealing myself as trainer. I am undertaking this research within my role as trainer. This thesis is in part autobiographic.
3.6 INTERPRETATIVE PHENOMENOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

Only what you have experienced yourself can be called knowledge.
Everything else is just information
Albert Einstein

As I turn to an examination of I.P.A., I want to lay down the ‘pull factors’ that, at a range of levels, led me to its adoption. One was its increasingly established nature which fulfilled my desire for a measure of ‘safe uncertainty’ (Mason, 1993). IPA is now described as the most widely known approach to phenomenological psychology among UK psychologists (Langdridge, 2007). It has a growing literature and a developing pedigree as an approach applicable to the study of human processes. It has what is rapidly becoming acknowledged as its own classic text (Smith et al, 2009). It is applicable to a wide range of psychological inquiry and has been applied within health psychology, applied social psychology and clinical psychology (Reid et al, 2005). 87% of clinical psychology programmes teach I.P.A. and around 20% of theses produced are I.P.A. based (Thompson et al, 2011). It also has a growing application within therapy (e.g. Turnet and Coyle, 2000; Golsworthy and Coyle, 2001, Miller and Draghi-Lorenz, 2005; Wilkes and Milton, 2006). There is an expanding community of I.P.A. researchers to interact with personally or electronically for inspiration and guidance.

I.P.A.’s philosophical base chimes with my personally-held one and resonates with the existential base that underpins my practice as counsellor. Its methods sit with notions of the I-Thou relationship and call on skills that I have developed in my counselling and teaching/training career. It provides a means to incorporate my insider status. It sits within the wider umbrella of phenomenological research, whose aim is to answer questions of meaning and to understand an experience as it is understood by those who are experiencing it. Critically, it connects itself with the idiographic, with the creation of rich personal accounts that aim to bring the phenomenon alive. These are my aims also.
3.6.1 Key influences

I.P.A. is a relatively new approach dating from the mid-1990s but emerges out of a long intellectual history (Smith, 1996; Smith et al, 2009). It has been characterised as a perspective or stance, stemming in part from its flexibility in terms of methods applied (Larkin et al, 2006). It was developed within psychology and brings together a number of features: the aim of understanding ‘lived’ experience; a belief that to do so requires interpretative work on the part of the researcher; a commitment to the idiographic or individual; a systematic approach to analysis (Smith & Osborn, 2007, 2008). A key early text identified two major roots - phenomenology and symbolic interactionism (Smith, 1996). By 2009, phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography were being identified as its three major influences (Smith et al, 2009). A discussion of these identified roots helps lay the ground for an informed understanding of I.P.A.’s basic character. In doing so, I highlight my relationship with them and how this has informed the character of this particular study. I will detail the journey from methodology to methods in Chapter four.

3.6.1.1 Phenomenology

Phenomenology is a joint product of the work of a number of key figures (Smith et al, 2009). Husserl (1859-1938) is widely acknowledged as its founder, although use of the term preceded him and he in turn was highly influenced by writers such as Hegel and Descartes (Moustakas, 1994). Three distinct present-day schools of phenomenological psychology are identified - the descriptive or transcendental; the hermeneutic or interpretative (which includes I.P.A.); and critical narrative analysis (Langdridge, 2007).

A focus on human subjective experience is regarded as the central defining characteristic of all phenomenological approaches. Phenomenology concerns itself with the study of experience and largely on ‘the basic pre-reflective features of experience’ (Smith et al, 2009, p.187). Husserl (2002/1901, p.66) talked of phenomenology’s task as to describe ‘the essences which directly make themselves known in intuition’. He used the term lifeworld to describe our pre-
reflective experience of the world, including the taken-for-granted and commonsensical. Merleau-Ponty (1962/1945) placed an emphasis on the embodied nature of consciousness, rejecting a mind-body dualism. ‘Our own body is in the world as the heart is in the organism’ (p.203). Lived experience always precedes intellectual analysis (Moran and Mooney, 2002). I.P.A. takes a particular stance. Smith et al (2009) talk of a bandwidth of reflection incorporating four layers: pre-reflective reflexivity; reflective ‘glancing’ at a pre-reflective experience; attentive reflection on the pre-reflective; deliberate controlled reflection. I.P.A. focuses on the third and fourth layers, on the applying of ‘deliberate controlled reflection’ on the part of the researcher to participants’ ‘attentive reflection on the pre-reflective’.

The second linked characteristic is the concern with meaning and the way that meaning arises in experience (Langdridge, 2007). Phenomenology rejects a Cartesian dualism of ‘reality out there’ separate from the individual (Laverty, 2003). Phenomenology rests on the assumption that human beings are active interpreters of the world rather than passive recipients of and reactors to external forces (Spinelli, 2005). Intentionality describes ‘an interaction between subject and world’ (Idhe, 1986, p.111). It refers to the process whereby we ‘stretch forth’ [intendere] to the world, making conscious interpretations of the raw stimuli we receive (Spinelli, ibid). Discourse moves away from bipolar constructs such as subject and object towards concepts such as noema and noesis, or ‘what is experienced’ and ‘the way it is experienced’ (Moustakas, 1994). Heidegger (2002) viewed human existence and consciousness as firmly embedded within a worldly context, with individuals interpreting the world through meaning-making processes shaped by their experiences within this worldly context. Gadamer (1979) talks of individuals constructing horizons of understanding or meaning, with Ricoeur (1981) arguing that such horizons of understanding are based on cultural forms such as language as much as expressed by them. As Moran and Mooney (2002, p.575) explain; ‘he saw the symbol as giving rise to thought, being much more than the expression of an intentional life that would supposedly lie behind and beneath it’. (For further discussion of ideas presented here, see section 3.6.1.2).
Interpretative processes are hence seen as both individual and unique, socially and culturally shaped (Spinelli, 2005). This duality is a key informant of this research study. As Samuels (2001, p.9) wrote, ‘the political and psychological mutually irradiate’. This has led me to contextualise trainers’ perceptions not only within psychological literature but within sociological literature also. While this is not the norm within I.P.A., this feels entirely appropriate for exploration of the experience and understandings of a role that is pursued within and impacted on by shifting social, economic, professional and political contexts. As Usher et al (1997) emphasise, it is common for insufficient emphasis to be placed on the contextual background of adult education. They point to the importance of an examination of the social and cultural locations of education to an understanding of its nature.

Phenomenologists place differing emphases on the extent to which researchers can transcend their situatedness within time, place and culture. In descriptive or transcendental phenomenology it is believed that an individual can and should transcend his or her assumptions and preconceptions, whether individually or socially derived (Langdridge, 2007). The Husserlian term ‘epoché’ refers to the attempt to do so, to revisit phenomena in an open and naïve manner (Moustakas, 1994). In hermeneutic and interpretative approaches, the ‘I’ is viewed as remaining embedded within the intentional process and thus, although the researcher should try to achieve epoché, it can never be fully realised. Hence the paradox in this study of an emphasis on researcher reflexivity which I simultaneously recognise I can never fully achieve. I strive; I cannot arrive.

A third defining characteristic is description. Phenomenological description is collected by lived experience, recollects lived experience, is validated by lived experience and in turn validates lived experience (Van Manen, 1990). Description is rich, with the phenomenon described in its totality in a fresh and open way. Van Manen (ibid. p.13) talks of phenomenology as a poetizing project that involves ‘the voice in an original singing of the world’. I.P.A. is connected more with cognition, with reflection on the experience rather than the immediate pre-reflexive experience focused on in much phenomenological writing (Smith et al,
While this suits my purpose in this study, perhaps what is lost is some of the richness of evocation that other phenomenological approaches provide.

### 3.6.1.2 Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics is foundational to I.P.A. Known as the ‘theory of interpretation’ (Smith et al, 2009, p.21), it has long roots in the study of religious texts. Schleiermacher (1768-1834) was an important figure in the development of hermeneutics as a general philosophy. Heidegger (1889-1976) is widely credited as initiating the move away from the transcendental towards the hermeneutic and existential within phenomenology. Other key figures cited in the development of hermeneutic phenomenology are Gadamer (1900-2002), Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) and Ricoeur (1913-2005).

Schleiermacher forwarded a holistic and, arguably, relatively contemporary view of the interpretative process (Smith et al, 2009). He focused on the importance of language and contended that texts are the products of both individual and communal forces. Texts emerge out of historically, socially and culturally-situated linguistic communities and reflect the particular meaning-systems or intentional processes of the individual authors. I.P.A. thus argues for exploration of both ‘sides of the equation’ within the research process (Smith et al, 2009). Schleiermacher (1998) viewed interpretation as an art or craft rather than a science. He stressed the intersubjective character of the interpretative process and argued that interpretation depends on the interpreter’s receptivity to others, their sharing of common human ground and their consequent capacity to utilise personal responses in the interpretative process.

Heidegger is argued to have been instrumental in shifting phenomenology away from description to hermeneutics and from a Husserlian science of consciousness to a study of existence (Moran, 2002). His concept of Dasein or ‘being-in-the-world’ places humanity firmly within a worldly context and forms a central platform for this study. Consciousness is not separate from the world; it is a formation of historically lived experience (Laverty, 2003). Every encounter with the world involves an interpretative process informed by tradition and pre-
supposition. A fore-structure or fore-understanding is brought to each encounter, and the individual interprets new stimuli in light of a priori experiences and meaning-making processes (Heidegger, 2002). There can be no presuppositionless philosophising. Understanding develops via a circling back and forth between presupposition and surprise, the so-called hermeneutic circle (Moran, 2002).

Smith et al (2009) make some key points concerning Heidegger’s view of the meaning-making process. For Heidegger, phenomenology’s aim of understanding the thing ‘as it shows itself’, as it is ‘brought to light’ involves both perception and analysis. Analysis is needed to make apparent not only the manifest but the latent meanings. ‘How things appear or are covered up must be explicitly studied. The things themselves always present themselves in a manner which is at the same time self-concealing’ (Moran, 2002, p.229). Smith et al (2009) also point to Heidegger’s contention that consciousness of our fore-understandings may not precede analysis but actually arise out of the analytical process itself. Hence, bracketing or epoché can only ever be partially achieved and needs to be viewed as an ongoing cyclical process.

Gadamer (1979) further developed Heidegger’s hermeneutic stance. He saw language as the means by which we encounter and inhabit the world (Moran and Mooney, 2002). Our understanding of the world is negotiated through conversation. Gadamer (1979) used the term ‘horizons of understanding' to describe the pre-judgements or fore-understanding we bring to a conversation and through which we try and understand the other. He emphasised the complex relationship between the interpreter and the interpreted, as well as the dynamic and dialogic nature of the interpretative process (Smith et al, 2009). To understand texts, we need awareness not only of their historical and cultural situatedness, but of our own (Langdridge, 2007). As this implies, reflexivity is crucial to the project. Unlike Schleiermacher, Gadamer believed that that we could not understand the utterer better than he understands himself. We can only have access to a negotiated meaning created via fusion of horizons of understanding.
Ricoeur’s major contribution lies in the hermeneutics of suspicion and empathy. The former uses theoretical perspective to shed light on texts; the latter interprets the texts on their own terms. Ricoeur (1981) argued that differing ideological standpoints afford radically different readings to symbols and hence may be important to the uncovering and examining of meaning. Freud, Nietzsche and Marx are cited as key ‘protagonists of suspicion’ as they all questioned the functioning of human consciousness (Scott-Baumann, 2009). I.P.A. argues for elements of both the hermeneutics of suspicion and empathy in the interpretation of texts (Smith et al, 2009). Such balancing is difficult. Applying the hermeneutics of suspicion may tempt the researcher towards assuming a superior understanding to that of the utterer (Schleiermacher, 1998). In this study I am guided by what has been called the ‘midway position’ of the hermeneutics of questioning (Smith et al, 2009) with any analysis rooted primarily ‘within the terms of the text’ (ibid, p.37) rather than an imported system of thought. Hence the importance of an on-going literature review stimulated by encounter with the texts themselves.
3.6.1.3 Symbolic interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is a sociological approach that roots human experience firmly within a social context. Originally connected with Mead (1934) and the Chicago School, Blumer (1969) is credited as its major proponent (Van Manen, 1990). It is somewhat of a ‘moveable feast’ in that it has been connected with variant ideological systems. It has been described as a theoretical perspective that informs a range of research methodologies, including grounded theory (Crotty, 1998). It has, conversely, been described as influenced by phenomenology (Smith, 1996). It has also been labelled as ‘pragmatism in sociological attire’ (Crotty, 1998, p.62). It has been associated with constructionism, an epistemological stance characterised by the view that truth or meaning is created in and through our engagement with the world (e.g. Crotty, 1998).

Blumer (1969) identified three key underpinning principles:

1. A person acts towards things based on the meanings these things hold for him/her.
2. These meanings are derived from meaning-systems created out of social interaction with others.
3. The meanings of things for the person are based on their interpretation of these socially derived meanings.

These principles stem from Mead’s belief that every person is a social construction: ‘a person is a personality because he belongs to a community, because he takes over the institutions of that community into his own conduct’ (1934, p.162). Such a process rests on the human capacity to interact with others, to take on their standpoints, to see ourselves as social objects. This interaction requires the exchange of significant symbols; dialogue, hence, is central to symbolic interaction (Crotty, 1998). The intra-active and interactive nature of meaning-construction is emphasised: we communicate with ourselves as well as others: we assume a standpoint. The notion of individual agency in the meaning-making process is also acknowledged and embraced. In methodological terms, symbolic interactionism directs the researcher towards the attempt to attain the standpoint of those studied (Denzin, 1978).
3.6.1.4 Idiography

An important and relevant criticism of nomothetic approaches is their unsuitability for research into individual difference, research which by its very nature is antithetical to generalisation (Lamiell, 1987). While the nomothetic domain concerns itself with norms and averages, idiography concerns itself with the particular (Smith et al, 2009). It is generally used to describe study of the specific and/or individual rather than the general and/or generic (Larkin et al, 2006). It is much more strongly associated with qualitative approaches. Collection of very detailed data about a limited number of examples of a phenomenon permits exploration. Freedom from the restraints of meeting statistical assumptions allows consideration of fine distinctions, exceptions, and complex patterns of interrelationships. Researchers can develop multilayered interpretations by returning to the data to carry out multiple analyses of different aspects of the topics. It allows consideration of inconsistency and omission (Camic et al, 2003). It permits the development of context-dependent knowledge and a nuanced view of reality (Flyvbjerg, 2001, 2006). It produces live ‘videos’ rather than maps of places, reflecting the complexity of human experiencing (Smith et al, 2009). It can also be used to gain representative data (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In a study of Indigenous Australians (Bishop, Colquhoun & Johnson, 2006) the initial design of the study utilised a large sample size, failing to recognise that some aspects of culture were so well understood by the community that large sample sizes were not only not required, but reflected a lack of understanding of the phenomena being studied. Additionally, a focus on individual experience can be a political act, a listening to the ‘unlistened to’. Ashworth and Ashworth’s (2003) study of the lifeworld of an individual suffering from Alzheimer’s disease was aimed at demonstrating the existence of ‘personhood’ and hence the right for Alzheimer sufferers to be ‘regarded as individuals of infinite consequence’ (p.180).
3.6.2 The particular character of I.P.A.

As a prelude to the description of methods in Chapter 4, here I present a summary of how these influences have come together within I.P.A. and in particular how they have come together within this study.

I.P.A. concerns itself with the detailed examination of human lived experience. Like grounded theory, it aims to enable that experience to be expressed and understood within its own frame of reference rather than via predefined categories. Its focus is the reflection on subjective experience. The process of inquiry is viewed as interpretative throughout, with the researcher and participant involved in parallel and intertwined interpretative activity. It is committed to the idiographic: it situates participants within their particular contexts; it explores personal perspectives; it begins from detailed examination of the individual perspective (Smith et al, 2009). It is an approach argued to be particularly applicable where the topic under study is dynamic, contextual, subjective, relatively under-researched and incorporates issues of identity, self and sense-making (Smith, 2004). This fits the brief of this research.

3.6.2.1 Its epistemological base

The categorisation of the ontological/epistemological base for I.P.A. is not straightforward. Bids have been made for critical realism, constructionism and contextualism, among others. I am convinced by the arguments of Larkin et al (2006) who adopt contextualism as a ‘convenient shorthand’ to describe an integration of their preferred ontological and epistemological positions. They describe their ontological position as ‘minimal hermeneutic realism’, reflecting Heidegger’s recognition that things exist but that is within the context of human life that they are encountered and given meaning. This implies that research findings are to be viewed within a vortex encompassing the researcher, the participant, the subject matter and the encounter.

Contextualism is derived from the work of Pepper (1942) and, as its name suggests, emphasises the contextual nature of knowledge attributions. As
Flyvbjerg (2006) contends, general context-independent theory is unattainable in social science. Knowledge is the truth of an utterance within a context and we cannot ‘disquote’, i.e. remove truth from its context (Schaffer, 2004). All knowledge is local, provisional, and situation dependent (Jaeger & Rosnow, 1988). All accounts are imbued with subjectivity and intersubjectivity. Madill et al (2000) point to four dimensions which impact on the production of knowledge: participants’ personal understandings; researcher interpretations; cultural meaning systems; judgments over validity by scientific communities. I.P.A. accepts the inevitability of the impact of the researcher’s personal and cultural situatedness on the research process and hence the importance of an articulated researcher reflexivity (Madill et al, 2000).

Although Smith et al (2009) see the equal attention paid within I.P.A. to the individual and the wider context as placing it in a different position to social constructionist psychology, I do not struggle to identify commonalities. Indeed, Madill at al (2000) slip seamlessly and interchangeably between the use of the terms contextualism and contextualist constructionism. Constructionism and intentionality have been explicitly linked (Crotty, 1998). The world may be innately meaningless but it is our partner in the meaning-making process. Hence, I shall adopt the term contextualist constructionism as my preferred nomenclature for the approach’s epistemological underpinnings.

3.6.2.2 Its phenomenological character

The aim of I.P.A. is to do ‘experience-close’ research. It prioritises participants’ accounts of an experience of ‘some existential import’, and focuses on the meanings bestowed by participants on such experiences (Smith et al, 2009). It aims to produce rich detailed accounts of the participants’ view of the topic being investigated (Landgridge, 2007). This can encompass immediate, first-order subjective experiencing and second-order responses such as remembering, regretting, anticipating etc. (Smith et al, 2009). I.P.A. aims to be a multi-faceted and holistic phenomenological approach that embraces all aspects of being: the embodied, the cognitive-affective and the existential. As Smith et al (2009, p.34) comment: ‘People are psychical and psychological entities. They do things in the
world, they reflect on what they do, and those actions have meaningful, existential consequences’. It has been criticised for affording cognition a central role by its concentration on ‘reflection on experience’ rather than pre-reflective experience (e.g. Willig, 2001; Langdrige, 2007). It has been applied, however, to the study of emotional experience, for example, of the experience of anger (Eatough and Smith, 2006) and of pain (Smith and Osborn, 2007). The approach is congruent with my aim of the exploration of ‘reflection on experience’. I.P.A. does not seek to fulfil Husserl’s aim of establishing the eidetic structure or essence of experience. However, as Smith et al (2009) argue, over time research studies may come together and permit a more ambitious project of this type.

3.6.2.3 Its hermeneutic stance

I.P.A. research’s avowedly interpretative nature stems from its ontological, epistemological and theoretical underpinnings. People are viewed as sentient beings that are of the world and within the world, and as beings that encounter all aspects of that world via their sensory apparatus. We can only access phenomena or our perceptions of things; our contact with the world is inherently interpretative. This applies to researcher and participant alike – the so-called double hermeneutic. The participant is trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participant’s sense-making processes (Smith, 2008). Hence, interpretation is integral to analysis.

I.P.A. involves two levels of analysis. The first is more overtly descriptive of participant experience; the second is more overtly interpretative, as the initial description is placed within its wider context. The prevailing orthodoxy has been to place it within the context of psychological literature but in this study I also contextualise trainer understandings within the wider professional, educational and economic contexts. However, both processes are regarded as interpretative in character. Giving voice to participant experience inevitably involves interpretation and contextualisation rather than representation alone (Larkin et al, 2006). The hermeneutic circle is an important concept within I.P.A., describing the interpretative movement back and forth between the part and the whole of a text (McLeod, 2001). It is a dynamic operating at a number of levels between: the
single word and the sentence; the single extract and the complete text; the text and the complete oeuvre; the interview and the research project; the single episode and the complete life (Smith, 2007; Smith et al, 2009). This process also can be extended to embrace the relationship between the researcher’s on-going biography (the whole) and the encounter with the new participant (the part) (Smith, 2007; Smith et al, 2009).

I.P.A. aims to balance the hermeneutics of empathy and the hermeneutics of suspicion (Larkin et al, 2006; Smith, 2008; Smith et al, 2009). Smith et al (2009) suggest a centre-ground that combines a hermeneutics of empathy with a hermeneutics of questioning rather than suspicion. This reflects the desire to root the analysis within the texts, to take an insider perspective on participants’ experience and to interpret, to look at such perspectives from differing angles, to question and reflect. As I indicated earlier, this marks my approach.

**3.6.2.4 Its idiographic focus**

I.P.A. concerns itself with the painstaking and intricate analysis of cases rather than the seeking of generalisations. It entails detailed analysis of how participants perceive and make sense of their actions or what is happening to them. As befits its contextualist base, it is concerned with producing rich and nuanced accounts of lived experience as constructed within particular temporal, relational, geographical, biographical, social and cultural contexts. Sampling is not concerned with representativeness of population. Its aim is the production of ‘fine-grained accounts of patterns of meaning for participants reflecting on a shared experience’ (Smith et al, 2009, p.38). It unashamedly puts forward the importance of small sample size and, indeed, the pertinence of the single case study (Smith et al, 2009). It does not ally itself with the pursuit of saturation, described by Rennie (1998) as the continuation of sampling until new data is seen as no longer adding new meaning or further categorisation. The application of saturation is connected more readily with notions of generaliseability and representativeness rather than with the specific, the individual and the particular.
I.P.A. does not, however, turn away from the nomothetic. It retains the possibility of moving, in Husserlian terms, towards finding essential features of phenomena as research studies come together to form a mosaic of meaning-making. It is argued that its findings can act to illuminate and/or problematise more general findings. Importantly, the act of communicating research findings opens up the potential of speaking to the general, as the reader, in a further hermeneutic, examines the transferability to their own understanding and/or experiencing (Smith et al, 2009).
CHAPTER 4 METHODS

The scene at the table wasn’t going well
or so he thought
Why not try something different?
Leave Christ out.
Do the bread
and wine by themselves.
Add a knife

The First Still Life: Lawrence Raab (2009)

Although I.P.A. provides guidelines and/or suggestions as how to navigate the conversion of theory into practice, as Smith et al (2009, p.55) comment, such guidelines cannot ‘contain or constrain’ ‘the messy chaos of the lived world’. As Smith et al comment, I.P.A. does not come with a set of ‘rules’ to be followed to the word. Flexibility is required for successful data collection, and imagination and playfulness for successful analyses. Not only are a variety of methods appropriate but early decisions may well be modified in the light of experience. Methodolatry or the ‘slavish attachment and devotion to method that so often overtakes the discourse in the education and human services fields’ (Janesick, 1998, p.48) is to be avoided. As Smith (2004) warns, good qualitative research is not produced by following a cookbook.

The end-result has been the construction of four separate but inter-related research studies into the experiences and viewpoints of counsellor trainers. The precise form of the research differed from my initial plan and in the following sections I discuss the shifts in my decision-making. I also detail the sampling methods, data collection and data analysis procedures that I followed. I discuss ethical considerations, as well as the means I have employed to enhance the trustworthiness of the research process. I begin by returning to the research question and exploring its immediate context.
4.1 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

How do British counsellor trainers understand and experience their role?

Reflecting both the phenomenological and interpretative foundations of I.P.A., research questions focus on people’s experiences and/or the understanding, perceptions and views they apply to or derive from such experiences (Smith et al, 2009). My primary research question is couched in such terms. Related domains I wished to explore within the study were the trainers’:

- conceptualisation of the training role
- experiencing of the role
- sense of the role’s rewards and challenges
- sense of the relationship between their role and the theoretical orientation of training
- sense-making of the impact of training settings
- views and experiencing of regulatory and professionalisation processes

The stimulus for exploration of these domains came from a number of sources: literature within the area; the findings of earlier research with which I was engaged; dialogue with other trainers; reflection on my personal experiences, past and present. I also tentatively constructed a number of secondary research questions, stimulated by the interplay between a review of relevant literature and the emergent findings. What Smith et al (2009) call ‘second-tier research questions’ can serve as a base for more theory-based analysis, and established theoretical perspectives can sensitise us to possible theoretical threads in qualitative research findings (Charmaz, 2004). Both authors, however, urge caution. Charmaz talks of the starting-point being the scrutiny of theory rather than its application. Smith et al (ibid) emphasise that such questions are be rooted firmly in interaction with the data and are not to be geared towards hypothesis testing.
My tentative questions included:

- Can trainers’ experiences and sense-making be related to models of occupational reward and motivation?
- Can trainers’ understandings be contextualised within wider theories of professional education?
- Can trainers’ understandings and experiences be understood in relation to professionalisation processes?

### 4.2 SAMPLING STRATEGIES

A fundamental aim of all I.P.A. studies is ‘the detailed exploration of a participant’s view of the topic under investigation’ (Langdridge, 2007, p.107). From this mission flow a number of seemingly straightforward, interconnected sampling strategies. One is an unequivocal commitment to a small sample size, although its precise measure is seen as depending on a number of factors and there is no ‘right’ figure (Smith and Osborn, 2008). From my viewpoint, rather confusingly Reid et al’s (2005) review of published I.P.A. research found a mean number of fifteen. Less confusingly, Smith et al (2009) have more recently championed the single case study.

Sampling is purposive, i.e. participants are sought who ‘can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study’ (Cresswell, 2007, p.125). Individuals are generally recruited who are able and willing to articulate their experience and viewpoint in some detail. Indeed, a criticism levied at I.P.A. and qualitative methods in general is that they require a level of reflexivity and articulacy most likely to be found in middle-class groups (Smith et al, 2009). The sample is homogenous rather than heterogeneous, aiming neither for representativeness in terms of population nor probability (Brocki and Wearden, 2006). Smith et al (2009) talk rather loosely of the sample as ‘fairly’ homogenous, as based on ‘obvious social factors or other theoretical factors relevant to the study’ (p.50). They refer to practical considerations such as
accessibility and interpretative considerations such as the extent of variation that can be contained within the analysis.

I viewed the challenge of ‘finding a sample willing and able to articulate their experiences and viewpoints’ as relatively simple to satisfy. While Smith et al (2009) provide some counter-arguments, including the observation that accounts from middle-class professionals can be unhelpfully abstract and opaque, generally I perceived myself as fortunate in terms of my potential participants. I have experienced the majority of trainers I have interacted with as highly articulate and reflexive. Moreover I had substantial networks to call on built up over a twenty-year training career, albeit largely based in the person-centred and integrative training fields.

My challenges were primarily focused on the issue of homogeneity. For the purposes of manageability, I had elected to define counsellor training programmes as those designed to provide the core training, usually at Diploma level, widely regarded nowadays as necessary preparation for working as a counsellor within Great Britain. I did not exclude masters-level programmes where they incorporate ‘professional’ training. I had chosen to apply the term counsellor trainer to staff, commonly described as core or course tutors, who assume a major role in the delivery of the core training on such programmes. I defined the following elements of training as ‘core’ in line with B.A.C.P.’s (2009) classification: knowledge based learning; therapeutic competencies; development of self-awareness; professional development; skills work; practice placements.

Having delineated these boundaries, the diversity of settings and theoretical orientations of training lent an overall impression of heterogeneity rather than homogeneity. Moreover, a complexity of potential variables pertained to trainers - factors such as age, gender, class, race, sexuality, and disability. I was also aware of a range of other variables that had impacted on my experience of the role. The list included: the culture of the immediate staff team; my relationship with my cotutor; the particular nature of my responsibilities; the supportiveness of my immediate manager; the dynamics of particular student groups; developments in
my personal life. My initial intention to hold the role of trainer as the measure of homogeneity started to seem untenable.

I had a growing sense of the fine judgement involved in constructing a ‘closely defined group for whom the research question will be significant’ (Smith and Osborn, 2008, p.56) but whose boundaries are such that varieties in experience can be embraced and explored rather than silenced and excluded. I took what I hoped would be a ‘good-enough’ decision that the theoretical approach of training programmes within which trainers were involved should serve as the measure for homogeneity within samples. I recognised that divisions exist within these communities as much as between them. Sanders (2004) talks, for instance, of tribes within a person-centred nation. Integrative by definition embraces an overarching approach rather than a defined school. However, by restricting sample size, I anticipated that the analysis could hold such variation.

My plan was to undertake four I.P.A. studies focused on person-centred, psychodynamic, integrative and cognitive-behavioural trainers. Although I.P.A. does not aim for representativeness, an element of my decision-making was a desire to hear voices from the major schools. Person-centred, integrative and psychodynamic approaches figure highly in the list of current B.A.C.P. accredited counselling training courses (B.A.C.P., 2010b). CBT is argued to represent a significant approach to counselling (McLeod, 2009). Its inclusion was also stimulated by its ambiguous status within the counselling world. It is often depicted as separate and other and, increasingly, the ‘competition’. It has its own, separate professional organisation, the British Association for Behavioural and Cognitive Psychotherapies (B.A.B.C.P.), which carries its own practitioner and course accreditation schemes. An important motivation for its inclusion was the desire to straddle this divide.

To forestall further complication, I sought participants whose identified theoretical orientation reflected the courses within which they worked. I chose not to use settings as a measure. In relying largely on my professional networks, I was intending to utilise convenience and snowballing sampling strategies, approaching trainers known to me to invite participation or gain names of potential
participants. Pragmatically, my contacts were clustered across different settings and I did not want to exclude potential participants on this basis. I was also aware that individual trainers commonly have worked across differing settings, sometimes simultaneously. Moreover, lines can be blurred further by the common practice of the external validation of programmes in the private and voluntary sectors by universities or other awarding bodies (e.g. ABC). I chose not to aim for social and cultural homogeneity within samples for similar pragmatic reasons, although my personal experience led me to expect the dominance of a particular demographic – white, middle-class, female and relatively mature. Neither did I purposely look for participants with a particular career profile. Overall, I anticipated that the perceived significance of such factors would come through in the data, that I would encourage discussion of these areas in my questioning and that the level of consequent variation was such that it could be contained in the analysis.

Such potential for variation within samples reinforced the need for sample size at the lower end of the I.P.A. ‘norm’. The size range three – six is suggested for a student project (Smith et al, 2009) providing sufficient cases to develop meaningful points of similarity and difference without producing overwhelming amounts of data. I initially opted for a sample size of four for each study. This would lead to me working with a total of sixteen cases. This combined manageability with scope for in-depth exploration of each individual account. I came to recognise, however, some confusion in my methodological ‘knowing-in-action’ (Schön, 1987). My strategy of equal sample size was based on ensuring a parity of representation between the four studies, despite their discrete nature and the approach’s idiographic stance. To compound, I was applying quantitative measures, i.e. number of voices, to ensure this parity despite my recognition that a perspective can equally well be represented by a lone voice as a choir.

I returned to the idiographic basis of IPA research and to the understanding that any group claims are to be built cautiously and primarily emerge from the accumulation of research studies over time (Smith et al, 2009). I also returned to allowing developments within the research to shape my decision-making processes, including sample size. The result was four studies of varying sample
size. As well as granting myself greater freedoms, I also applied constraints. One was geographical. As a sole researcher combining my research with a demanding training role, I needed to use my time effectively and I focused recruitment within the confines of Great Britain. A failed attempt to interview a trainer based in Northern Ireland served to reinforce this decision. (see 4.3 below).

4.3 THE FOUR STUDIES

I present these studies, as I do the findings, to reflect the order in which both the interviewing and data analysis processes were undertaken. The descriptions of the participants are all based on their status at the time of interview. To protect their anonymity, I have given participants fictional names and either anonymised or attached fictional titles to their institutional contexts. I omit identifying details of their training career history as well some details concerning their precise age, nationality and so forth. Larkin (2006) interprets Heidegger’s concept of dasein (2002) as pointing to the essentially embedded, intertwined and immersed nature of our engagement with the world we inhabit. Hence by stripping away elements of their engagement with the world, I hold a regretful sense of having de-personalised the participants. However, this felt a necessary price to pay for the protection of the identity of the individual participants who assume what is a highly public role. I discuss my decision-making further in the ethics section.

Study 1 Person-centred trainers

I had rich contacts within this community and my challenge was to restrict the number of participants to a manageable sample size. I elected to stop at five, making this the study with the largest sample. All five trainers were personally known to me. They share a common demographic, that of being white, female and middle-aged (i.e. in their forties or fifties). They also all carry substantial training experience, having been involved with training in differing capacities for between twelve and twenty-plus years. Four of the five had worked across differing settings.
Frances is a highly experienced white female trainer in her fifties, with over twenty years of training experience in a variety of roles mainly within the private sector. She is full-time head of a university-based ‘classical client-centred’ masters programme.

Peggy is a white female in her fifties with nearly twenty years of involvement in counselling training, again in a variety of roles, within private and university settings. Currently not working, her last appointment was as a part-time core tutor on a university-based post-graduate person-centred diploma programme.

Teresa is a white female in her mid-forties and has been involved with counselling training for over thirteen years. She has worked both within further education and universities. Currently, she acts as both programme manager and core tutor on two university-based post-graduate diploma programmes. She described herself and the programmes as ‘person-centred - towards the experiential end, not classical - the sort of active, involved’.

Jane is a white female in her late forties. She has been involved in training for more than ten years, mainly within the private sector, although she has worked within further and higher education settings. Her current role is as head of a training institute within the private sector which offers a range of externally-validated counselling training provision.

Diane is a white female in her late forties. Her thirteen years of experience in training has all been concentrated in the further education sector. She teaches on a range of programmes including a diploma programme whose core model she described as person-centred/humanistic.

Study 2 Integrative trainers

I utilised my professional networks in order to recruit four participants. Although carrying a similar cultural and age profile to study one, three of the participants
were male. All four were based in universities, although three have experience of working across differing sectors.

**Frank** is in his late fifties/early sixties, and describes himself as white, male and British. He has been involved in counselling training for around twenty years. His experience spans the private and university sectors. He heads a university-based masters training programme. He describes himself as integrative.

**Steve** is a white male in his late fifties/early sixties. He has been engaged in training for twelve to thirteen years, initially on further and adult education programmes, but more recently predominantly within the university sector. His current role is as a part-time core tutor on a university-based integrative masters programme.

**Andy** is a white male in his early fifties. He has been engaged in tutoring on training programmes for nearly ten years both within the private sector and the university sector. He works as a core tutor on a part-time basis on a university-based integrative masters programme.

**Laura** is a white female in her early fifties. She has been involved in training for seven years and heads up a university-based post-graduate diploma programme. All her training experience has taken place within the university sector. She describes the course’s orientation as integrative.

### Study 3 Psychodynamic trainers

I recruited one participant by asking for referrals from an integrative trainer whose initial training had been psychodynamic. I utilised the list of accredited courses on the B.A.C.P. website to identify psychodynamic courses and then identified staff via course websites. This led to the recruitment of two further participants. A scheduled interview with a fourth potential participant failed to take place. I decided to stay with the resultant sample size of three, one recommended as well-suited to a detailed examination of similarities and
differences (Smith et al, 2009). This sample was uniform in that the participants were all white and female. Two were university-based and one based in the private sector. An area of substantial variation was in terms of age.

**Sue** is a white female in her late thirties. She had been involved in training for eight years, for the last five as a part-time core tutor on psychodynamic diploma programmes in the university sector. Her current role is as tutor on a post-graduate diploma programme for which she also assumes some administrative responsibilities. She describes herself as ‘pretty dyed in the wool psychodynamic’ and as connected with ‘more modern object relations’. She describes the diploma programme as ‘straight down the line psychodynamic’

**Mary** is a white female above official retirement age, with over twenty years of experience in the training field. She heads up her own training organisation in the private sector and continues to play a core role in delivery of the externally-validated diploma programme. She describes both herself and the diploma as psychodynamic in orientation but rooted in practice-based learning.

**Lynne** is a white female in her forties. She had been involved in training for more than fifteen years in the university sector, initially at certificate level in a range of part-time roles but more recently at diploma level. She is currently full-time course director of a university-based post-graduate diploma programme. She describes herself as psychodynamic but as embracing the importance of relationship. The programme she directs is described as psychodynamic.

**Study 4 Cognitive Behavioural (CBT) trainers**

I searched for potential participants via the B.A.B.C.P. website and used existing contacts I had with individuals within differing university settings as points of referral. The result was a sample of four. The sample was unanimously white,
evenly divided by gender and carried similar age profiles. Settings were university and NHS based.

**Jack** is a white male in his fifties. He has been involved in training in various capacities for around fifteen years. He has worked in the university sector on a full-time basis for over three years and heads up a relatively new CBT masters programme. Jack describes himself as CBT but with specialist knowledge in one particular CBT approach.

**Sophie** is a female in her fifties who describes her socio-cultural status as Jewish. She has been involved in training on CBT programmes for four years within the university sector. She works full-time and is programme director for one masters programme while providing input on other CBT courses. She describes herself as CBP but ‘not purist’.

**Dave** is a white male in his early forties. He has been involved in training for nine years. He heads up a suite of programmes, including a post-graduate CBT diploma programme. The programmes are located within the N.H.S. and are university-validate. He described his orientation as CBT.

**Jenny** is a white female in her early forties. She has six years of training experience, all within the university sector and within a variety of roles and on a range of CBT programmes. She is programme leader for a CBT masters programme. She described her orientation as more relationally-based, ‘fourth-wave’ CBP.

### 4.4 DATA COLLECTION

Although other methods have been used, e.g. postal questionnaires, email dialogues, focus groups and observational methods, individual semi-structured face-to-face interviewing has dominated within I.P.A. (Reid et al, 2005). Atkinson
and Silverman (1997) used the term ‘interview society’ to convey the dominance of face-to-face interviews in social interchange. Interviewing is a widely accepted and applied method of data collection in qualitative research; many would argue that it constitutes *the* staple method (Flowers, 2008). I, too, chose individual semi-structured face-to-face interviews because, like others before me, I found it eminently suitable for task. ‘If you want to know how people understand their world and lives, why not talk with them?’ (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.xvii). I also responded to the notion of interviewing as a craft for which my occupational background had prepared me (Dallos and Vetere, 2005; Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). Therapeutic training and experience is recognised as helping to develop capacities in the interviewing field. Indeed, Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) cite Carl Rogers as ‘a master of the trade’.

Van Manen (1990) identifies two purposes of interviewing from a hermeneutic phenomenological viewpoint. One is the exploration and collection of experiential narrative material to act as a resource for enriching and deepening understanding of a human phenomenon. The second is the development of a ‘conversational relation’ with the interviewee about the meaning of an experience. Kvale and Brinkmann’s (2009) use the ‘Rubin vase’ image to illustrate how this conversational relation is intrinsic to the creation of interview knowledge.

**Diagram 3 The Rubin Vase**
The faces highlight the interpersonal aspect of this ‘co-determined interaction’ (Smith and Osborn, 2008, p.59). The vase symbolises the construction of knowledge through and within that interaction. Interview knowledge is ‘produced, relational, conversational, contextual, linguistic, narrative and pragmatic’ (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.53). It is dynamic and transformative for both participants. Smith (2007, p.6) uses the metaphor of circling:

‘I start where I am at one point on the circle, caught up in my concerns, influenced by my preconceptions, shaped by my experience and expertise… I attempt to either bracket or at least acknowledge my preconceptions before I go round to an encounter with a research participant at the other side of the circle… I have moved from a point where I am the focus to one where the participant is the focus… Having concluded the conversation, I continue the journey round the circle back to where I started… However, I am irretrievably changed because of the encounter…’

My therapeutic philosophy influenced my stance towards interviewing. As Fontana and Frey (2008) comment, researchers are increasingly recognising the need to interact with participants as human beings or persons. Oakley (1981) argued that in interviewing there is ‘no intimacy without reciprocity’ (p.49). Accordingly, while the researcher may follow the usual protocol of posing questions for the participant to answer, (s)he also may well share personal experiences or comment on the unfolding process. As Etherington (2004) notes, such an approach is experienced as more of a conversation of equals than a hierarchical interview. Moreover, it explicitly acknowledges rather than obscures the co-constructed nature of interview knowledge.

This approach mirrors my therapeutic approach, within which I aim to embody the ‘core’ conditions of congruence, respect and empathy (Rogers, 1951, 1957) and to strive for appropriate mutuality and openness within the relationship. However, as in counselling sessions, I also acknowledge the need for care and sensitivity in self-disclosure. Its aim is equalisation and facilitation, not ‘competitive, or comparative, dynamics’ (Smith et al, 2009, p.66).
4.5 THE INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

In semi-structured interviews, the researcher has some specific points to cover but wishes to facilitate the interviewee in telling their story in a variety of ways (Sanders and Wilkins, 2010). I followed the widely-adopted protocol of devising an interview schedule or a ‘virtual map’ for the interview (Smith et al, 2009). This was designed as a series of questions to guide exploration of certain areas (see appendices). Generally, the questions served as a loose guide for myself of areas to be traversed and might become redundant as trainers touched on these areas unprompted. These areas included:

- Perceptions of the role of the trainer.
- Process of becoming a trainer.
- Perceptions of impact of course theoretical orientation
- Perceptions of impact of setting
- Impact of proposed regulation and professionalisation
- The lived experience of being a trainer – rewards and challenges

I did not want the schedule to block my openness to fresh issues introduced by trainers. I wished to adapt to changing circumstances, perhaps altering questions asked and subjects explored in an iterative manner (Rubin and Rubin, 2000). Etherington (2004) talks of the importance of meeting participants ‘wherever they are at that point in their lives, and to recognise that stories are constantly being reconstructed’ (p.77). Equally, participants were to be meeting me at differing points in my interviewing ‘life’ As I enunciated in a talk I gave to professional doctorate students, the concept of standard questions does not fit with any understanding that the interviewer is inevitably changed by each interaction. The interview schedule I present in the appendix was thus, an initial one and did not form the blueprint for all interviews.
4.6 TRANSCRIPTION

All the interviews took place at a venue of the participant’s choice. All but two of the interviews took place at the trainers’ work setting. One (Peggy’s) took place at the trainer’s home; another (Diane’s) took place at my work setting. The interviews lasted between one and one-and-a-half hours. They were recorded on a digital audio-recorder and subsequently transcribed.

Transcription is an interpretative task and one that involves abstraction and loss (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

‘The audio recording of the interview involves a first abstraction from the live physical presence, with a loss of body language such as posture and gestures. The transcription of the interview conversation to a written form involves a second abstraction, where the tone of the voice, the intonations, and the breathing are lost. In short, the transcripts are impoverished, decontextualized renderings of live interview conversations.’ (p.178)

It also involves choice and selection in terms of which of the many dimensions of interview conversation we record, for which there is no standard formula. I chose to follow guidelines suggested within I.P.A. As the analysis is focused on the meaning of the content of the participants’ accounts, less emphasis is placed on notating prosodic aspects such as length of pauses, inflexion, and so forth (Smith et al, 2009). The transcript generally includes all the words of those involved in the interview, as well as notable paraverbal ‘events’ such as laughter, long pauses and noticeable hesitations.

4.7 DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis within I.P.A. is characterised by a common set of processes involving movement from the particular to the shared and from the phenomenological to the interpretative (Smith et al, 2009). Such processes are complex. They are ‘collaborative-personal, intuitive-systematic, laborious-creative, intense …. and
conceptually-demanding’ (De Visser et al, 2010). Some might view such processes as inherently artistic; Smith (2007, 2009) depicts them as scientific. Osborne (2006) depicts hermeneutics as both art and science.

I embrace all of these ways of understanding the analytic endeavour. I also apply the concepts of stages, strategies, circling and spiralling in differing measure to the analytic process. The concepts of stages implies tasks to be done, work to be necessarily undertaken, but can conjure up an image of an ordered, linear process and obscure its dynamic and inductive nature. The concept of strategies implies direction, goals, purpose and informed understanding while avoiding linear overtones. Dynamism is implied. Interpretative strategies are cumulative within transcripts, integrative across transcripts, focused and interrogative, analogous and metaphoric, and dialogic with theory (Smith and Larkin, 2010). This links with the concept of circling, as the hermeneutic circle leads researchers back and forth through differing ways of interacting with data. I also find the concept of the hermeneutic spiral helpful, alluding as it does to the potentially infinite nature of the interpretative process.

‘Only interpretations which do not produce new meaning are circular, with the circle becoming in fact a vicious circle ….. Any interpretation is provisional and relative to a given (and situated) critical project. In fact, from the moment a text is contemplated as a component part of a larger whole, the interpretive moment begins anew. It is easily seen that the attempt to read any cultural text opens up a potentially ever-expanding interpretive process.’ (Garcia Landa, 2010, p.157)

The analytic processes I pursued reflected all of these understandings. The stages I followed were strongly influenced by, but not absolutely defined by, those of Smith et al (2009). The following presentation of the analytic stages needs to be contextualised thus.
4.8 ANALYTIC STAGES

4.8.1 Attunement

The first stage involved an active engagement with the data. I began by listening to the individual recording to refamiliarise myself with the interview. I would then read the transcript and return to reflective notes I made after each interview. Here is an example:

10 May 2008
In this interview I was moved by her honesty, her willingness to disclose her sense of her own incompetencies and inadequacies and willingness to look at how she might meet her personal needs in the training role … and me being aware that things were being relayed in shorthand, that she was assuming a shared language and set of values around person-centredness, the world where we first met. Something else, though – a sense of kinship as women, as women in their 50s, as women in academia.

The aim of this initial process was to bring the interviewee to the centre of my attention, to attune myself to the content of the interview, its rhythm and flow, my sense of the intrapersonal and interpersonal experiencing that went on within its boundaries.

4.8.2 Immersion and initial noting

I then began a line-by-line analysis of the transcript. This initial analytic process combines elements of free or open coding and descriptive or phenomenological analysis, and is an open-ended, complex process (Smith et al, 2009). It is inherently interpretative even at this initial descriptive level. It involves interpretation of a written interpretation of a complex interaction (involving self) that took place at a distance in time. Smith et al (2009) suggest the following guidelines for the form of these initial comments: descriptive of content, picking out key words, phrases or explanations used by the participant; linguistic, focusing on language use, pauses, laughter, use of metaphor etc.; conceptual,
initial sense of participants overarching understanding of the matter that are discussing.

Speech is generally seen as an act of communication intended to have specific meanings for, and effects on, particular listeners (Yardley, 2000). I began by simply highlighting words or phrases in the transcript that stood out for me as potentially important. I then moved to making initial exploratory comments in one margin. In this, I kept asking myself the question ‘what is the participant trying to tell me?’ suggested by Flowers (private communication). This helped me not only to concentrate on content but intent, on the interactive context within which the data was collected. [Examples of this and following stages using Peggy’s text as illustration are included in the appendices].

4.8.3 Identifying themes

This stage involved the explicit shift towards interpretative coding, as I moved towards the identification or construction of themes within each individual account. Braun and Clark (2006) talk of a theme as capturing or representing some level of patterned response within the data. Smith (2008) talks of this stage as turning initial notes into ‘concise phrases which aim to capture the essential quality of what was found in the text’ (p.68). It entails a dialogue between the researcher, their psychological knowledge and the coded data (De Visser et al, 2010).

This process involves a set of difficult balancing acts. One concerns moving towards a higher level of abstraction whilst maintaining the evident link with the participant’s words and the initial notes. Another focuses on reducing the volume of analysis without losing complexity. According to Smith et al (2009), the focus shifts from the transcript to the initial notes as the source material. I found, however, that my focus shifted from my initial notes to the original words in a backward and forward movement throughout, as I tried to ensure the continued rootedness of my interpretation in the participant’s narrative.
4.8.4 Searching for connections across themes

I then moved to an interpretative mapping of how the themes in each transcript could be fitted together, or a summary of its superordinate themes. As Smith et al (2009) say, the essential task is to find a means of drawing the emergent themes together into a structure that embraces all the most significant and engaging aspects of the participant’s account. They suggest a range of possible and not mutually exclusive strategies. These include: abstraction (or putting like with like); subsumption (or identifying one theme as superordinate to other); polarisation (or looking for difference between themes); contextualisation (or identifying connections via time, place, etc.); frequency of mention; function served in participants’ presentation of self.

4.8.5 Repeating 1-4 with each new case in the study

The next stage involved repeating stages one to four for all cases within each study. Two potential strategies are proposed (Smith, 2008; Willig, 2008). One is to use the table of themes from the first interview to help orient subsequent analyses; the alternative is to consciously start afresh with each case. Whatever the approach applied, each case should be interacted with on the basis of its individual nature (Smith et al, 2009). My decided-on strategy was to construct themes afresh for each case. Unlike the interviewing process, whereby I consciously brought forth at least some of my understandings from previous interviews, I wanted to attempt to bracket what I might be bringing forward from prior analyses. I wanted to encourage my openness to the new and novel within each account. Moreover, the analysis of a new text might and did lead me to return with a fresh eye to one previously analysed. This reformulation and revision of interpretation in the light of fresh observations reflects the iterative nature of I.P.A. research.

4.8.6 Looking for patterns across cases within studies

This stage focused on the construction of an overarching framework for each study or a final table of superordinate themes. It embodied the attempt to
construct an analysis which transcends the structure of the data collection method, focuses on understanding and meaning and forms the basis for a ‘psychologically-relevant’ account of the participants’ engagement with the world’ (Smith and Larkin, 2010). While I.P.A. writers encourage researchers to ‘dig deeper’ in interpretative terms (e.g. Smith et al, 2009), such interpretation remains firmly rooted in the first-person accounts themselves. Its creation involves the balancing of the hermeneutics of empathy and of questioning, as participant accounts are structured on their own terms and in terms of how their meaning might be contextualised and understood beyond that point.

4.8.7 Making tentative links across studies

Although all stages call for sensitivity and tentativeness, these are essential to this stage. In this stage I picked out areas of similarity and difference, convergence and divergence between the differing studies. The balance here was to do so without falling into an attempt to make nomothetic claims, to compare and contrast and perhaps offer tentative interpretations without presenting them as generalised and generalisable truths. A thorough discussion of the findings was integral to this process and hence the links I made across studies are offered not at the end of chapter 5 ‘findings’ but chapter 6 ‘discussion’.

4.8.8 Writing up

I included this stage as the analytic process continues into the writing stage. The norm within I.P.A. is the production of a narrative account which explains, expands and nuances the analysis (Smith, 2008). I discuss in greater depth the form I adopted in chapter 5.

The following diagram presents an overview of the analytic process. I provide a more experiential account in chapter seven.
Diagram 4. The Analytic Process

Transcription

Attunement

Initial noting ‘free or open coding’

Identify themes ‘interpretative coding’

Make connections between themes

Repeat process for each account in the study

Look for patterns across cases within the study

Repeat process for 3 more studies

Make tentative links across the four studies

Writing up

Play audio recording

Read transcript

Read reflective notes

Carry out line-by-line analysis

Add descriptive, linguistic and conceptual comments

Move to a higher level of abstraction

Capture patterned responses in the data

Develop superordinate and subordinate themes

Draw emergent themes into a structure

Construct final table of superordinate and subordinate themes for each study

Identify areas of similarity and difference between studies

Offer tentative super-superordinate themes
4.9 VALIDITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

The question of validity in qualitative research is a thorny one given its connections with positivist notions of objectivity. Within quantitative approaches, it relies heavily on rigorous adherence to methodological rules and standards to ensure the adequate distance between the subjective ‘biases’ of the researcher and the object of study. Such goals and measures are problematic from a phenomenological viewpoint as knowledge as a phenomenon in the world is strictly correlated with subjectivity. As Giorgi (2002, p.9) argued, there may be ‘things or events “in-themselves”, but there is no “knowledge-in-itself”’. From an epistemological stance of contextualist constructionism, knowledge is inherently localised, contextualised and socially constructed.

One answer has been to move away from the question of validity with its truth overtones towards looking at the ‘trustworthiness’ or ‘goodness’ of the research (Angen, 2000). Fossey et al (2002) argue that measures of quality should focus on good practice in the conduct of the research (methodological rigour) as well as the trustworthiness of interpretations made (interpretive rigour). In research conducted from a contextualist constructionist epistemology, it is argued that the accounts (participants’ and researcher’s) need to be demonstrably grounded in the contexts within which they were produced (Madill et al, 2000; Willig, 2008).

Yardley’s (2000, 2008) four core principles effectively encapsulate these demands and helped guide the practice and presentation of this research.
Table 4 Core principles of trustworthy research (Yardley, 2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sensitivity to context</th>
<th>Theoretical; relevant literature; empirical data; sociocultural setting; participants’ perspectives; ethical issues.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Commitment and rigour</td>
<td>In-depth engagement with topic; methodological competence/skill; thorough data collection; depth/breadth of analysis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transparency and coherence</td>
<td>Clarity and power of description/argument; transparent methods and data presentation; fit between theory and method; reflexivity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact and importance</td>
<td>Theoretical (enriching understanding); socio-cultural; practical (for community, policy makers, health workers).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I was also strongly informed by the ‘good practice’ and validity criteria of Stiles (1999). Stiles’ general principles for ‘good practice’ include: clear exposition of the study’s topic; clear justification for the selection of participants and materials; clear description of methods applied to gather and analyse material. Specific canons of good practice to help readers assess the openness of the researcher to shifts in understanding include: engagement with the material; an iterative research process; grounding of analysis in the data; use of descriptive interview questions. He also cites reporting practices such as: disclosure of researcher’s fore-structure; explication of social and cultural context; description of researcher’s internal processes. Keynotes throughout are clarity and transparency.
Table 5 Validity criteria (Stiles, 1999)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coherence</th>
<th>Is the interpretation internally consistent, comprehensive, able to encompass new elements that arise?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uncovering; self-evidence</td>
<td>Does the interpretation uncover something previously hidden or unknown? Did it produce change in the reader? Did it feel right to the reader?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Testimonial validity</td>
<td>Did participants indicate that the interpretation felt accurate?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catalytic validity</td>
<td>Did the research process produce change in participants?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consensus; replication</td>
<td>Did multiple investigators find the proposed interpretations convincing? Were the findings replicated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflexive validity</td>
<td>Was the researcher changed? Was there evidence of permeability in the researcher’s understanding?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In terms of validity criteria, Stiles argues that readers are well-placed to assess ‘coherence’ and ‘uncovering; self-evidence’, participants to assess ‘testimonial’ and ‘catalytic’ and researchers to assess ‘consensus; replication’ and ‘reflexive’ validity. Similarly I would argue that the reader is key to any assessment of the evidencing of good practice criteria within reports.

I was also informed by the notion of the independent audit. I have not only prioritised clarity and transparency as key in the reporting of the research, I have attempted to enhance the transparency of the analytic processes throughout by maintaining an electronic ‘paper trail’. As Smith et al (2009) state, the idea of the independent audit is a powerful way of the researcher thinking about validity issues. Could an independent auditor come in and ‘check that a coherent chain of
arguments runs from the initial raw data to the final write-up’ (p.183)? Note that this is not about checking the ‘rightness’ of the analytic process, but its rigorous and systematic nature. Hence my inclusions of transcript line references for all participant quotes and cross-references for themes. Accompanying this trail, I maintained a research journal within which I caught personal reflections, either to potentially bracket or to inform the analysis. Here is an extract where the hermeneutics of questioning is evident, as well as self-questioning. I am being changed by the process; this permeability is uncomfortable at points.

10 April 2008
I am now conducting interviews and am already questioning – is counselling training about meeting the needs of the counselling trainer? Sense of passion, of mission emerging – of costs and benefits of the role coming together in a package that stretches and fulfils… and people not really questioning so far their right to be a trainer. And I don’t know that I did – I question[ed] my competence but not my entitlement. And I do get some deep needs met as a trainer – admiration, importance, closeness, belonging. Being able to have a place inside and outside a group – ‘safe’ belonging.

Alongside the maintenance of an audit trail, participants, sample, expert, and peers can act as potential sources for ‘credibility checking’ (De Visser et al, 2010). Participants are sources of testimonial and catalytic validity. Stiles talks of a number of relevant questions to address in relation to the interview process:

- Did participants indicate that the interpretation accurately described their experience?
- Did they make direct or indirect illusions to feeling understood?
- Were their reactions to hearing the interpretation consistent with the interpretation’s motifs?
- Did they reveal fresh and deeper material?

These questions help widen the discussion beyond the practice of member or respondent validation, the so-called member check ‘whereby a researcher submits
materials relevant to an investigation for checking by the people who were the source of those materials’ (Bryman, 2010). It has been criticised for perpetuating the notion of a fixed reality against which the account can be measured (Sandelowski, 1993). Morse (1998) argues that it can lead to confusion rather than confirmation because participants may have changed their minds about the issue. The experience of the interview process itself may have impacted on their original sense-making, or new experiences may have intervened. Respondents may disagree with the researcher’s interpretation and the question of whose interpretation should stand arises (Angen, 2000). Such critiques make the procedure particularly problematic within I.P.A., within which the notion of the double hermeneutic makes explicit that the researcher is engaged in making sense of the participant’s sense-making.

As I discuss briefly in section 4.10, rejecting a member check entirely felt problematic given the public nature of the role. I chose to contact participants to ascertain whether they were content with the way they had been portrayed and, very explicitly, with quotes used and interpretations made. As I said in my e-mail dialogue with Laura ‘it’s an IPA study, very much me interpreting you making sense of your experiences at a particular point in time’ (private communication). Nobody voiced any difficulty, leading me to believe I had managed to stay with the hermeneutics of empathy and a respectful hermeneutics of questioning. Laura’s response confirmed the temporal context of the study: ‘it is interesting to read my view then - it is different now for a range of reasons - and contrast it with now. As you say it is a snapshot of a particular point in time’ (private communication).

Within interviews, I frequently summarised my sense of what was being said so that the trainer could add to, subtract from and generally interact with my interpretations. Trainers did express their sense of feeling understood and produced fresh and deeper material. Here is an extract from an interview as illustration:
Frances: So, yeah, I think there might be something in that. I mean I supposed it’s a bit hackneyed, but not having anything to fall back on that says it’s their fault, it’s their process, it’s, you know, I...

[pause]

Liz: I can’t pathologise them

Frances: Absolutely. You could say I’m more at home being the - No I don’t want to say that - I was going to say I’m more at home being the expert, but I don’t want to say that.

Liz: Which is something you picked out as something you live uneasily with at the minute, to actually have expertise. And that ‘if I ain’t an expert by now, shoot me, but where does that fit with’ ... [pause]?

Frances: ...and where do you draw the line? I mean it’s also about expertise in what, and an expert in what.........

[113-124]

I also sought and incorporated ‘sample, peer and expert’ feedback. When I talk of ‘sample’ feedback here, I am talking about trainers as a general body. Again, reservations have been voiced about the utility of such feedback. Morse (1994) contends that as a researcher’s peers can never have the same involvement with the information as the principal investigator, they will be restricted in their ability to judge whether the interpretations have given adequate consideration to all perspectives. This argument can be extended to sample and expert feedback. Moreover, as with member checking and triangulation, there are still overtones of an underlying objective reality to be converged upon (Silverman, 1993). While holding such reservations, I found such feedback helpful in widening my perspectives, alerting me to new ones, helping bring to consciousness my foreunderstandings, distil my emerging understandings and assess the cogency of my arguments. Although, as researcher, I was the channel through which the experiences were conducted and constructed, such triangulations were important means whereby I expanded my potential to respond in a rigorous, systematic, open-minded and creative manner to the accounts.

To this end, I led a session on the Professional Doctorate programme at the University of Manchester, where I explored and gained peer feedback on my
evolving approach towards interviewing. I consulted trainer colleagues throughout on the developing analysis, testing its coherence and resonance with their experiencing. I presented initial findings of study one to two groups of person-centred trainers. The first was at a conference in Britain (Ballinger, 2008b) where participants expressed their sense of resonance with the emerging analytic structure and made suggestions for ways forward for further interpretation. The second occasion was with a group of person-centred trainers based in Kenya, where again trainers responded positively. I also separately engaged this group of six trainers in analysing pieces of transcripts, an exercise which I found particularly helpful in sensitising me to the fore-understandings I was bringing to the analytic process as well as opening me up to differing perspectives. My research supervisor was an invaluable source of ‘expert’ feedback throughout the process.

4.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In exploring my decision-making, I use the terms moral and ethical interchangeably. As Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) point out, the two terms both have linguistic roots in notions of character, although ethics have come to be associated more with formal guidelines and morality more with everyday conduct.

Aristotle argued for three necessary features of moral action: we must act with knowledge; we must deliberately choose the act for its own sake; the act must spring from a fixed disposition of character (Hobson, 2001). The dynamic and contextual nature of such decision-making and conduct is reflected in notions of ‘ethics in practice’ (or ‘microethics) and of ‘ethically important moments’ - ‘difficult, often subtle, and usually unpredictable situations that arise in the practice of doing research’ (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004, p.262). Guillemin and Gillam argue that being reflexive in an ethical sense means being sensitive and responsive towards the microethical dimensions of research practice. Aristotle spoke of the need for phronesis, or practical wisdom, ‘the ability to see and describe events in their value-laden contexts, and judge accordingly’ (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.67). Ethical concerns are argued, moreover, to extend beyond
the means to the ends of research, requiring us to ‘provide practical, generative, possibly transformative, and hopefully nondogmatic answers to the questions we pose as researchers’ (Angen, 2000, p.389).

I agree with Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) that ethical conduct is more about applying judgment than following rules. However, to return to Aristotle’s injunction to act with knowledge, judgment needs to be underpinned by an understanding of the boundaries and foundations for ethical conduct. Principles commonly viewed as underpinning ethical research with human participants are: beneficence or promotion of well-being; nonmaleficence or the avoidance of harm; autonomy or respect for participants’ self-responsibility; fidelity or ensuring the fair and just treatment of all participants (McLeod, 2003). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) talk of four areas of general ethical concern: informed consent; confidentiality; consequences; the role of the researcher. As they say, it is useful to view these as ‘fields of uncertainty’ to be continually addressed throughout the study.

I was informed by such considerations and specifically guided by a number of sources. One was the B.A.C.P. Ethical Framework (2010a). Their ethical principles embrace the importance of trustworthiness, respect for autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice or fair and impartial treatment and self-respect. B.A.C.P refer to ‘personal moral qualities’ of empathy, respect, humility, competence, fairness, wisdom and courage and I aspired to embrace these in my conduct as a researcher. Ethical guidelines are provided by Bond (2004) for researching counselling and psychotherapy grouped under ethical orientation, risk, relationship with participants, research integrity and research governance. In terms of governance I worked within the specific parameters of the University of Manchester Ethical Guidelines for Research, and was required to gain ethical approval from the University for the conduct of this research.

As Guillemin and Gillam (2004) note, the ultimate responsibility for ensuring the ethical nature of the research rests with the researcher. Working within competence levels under supervision is integral to being trustworthy as a researcher. This concern led me to I.P.A. as a well-documented, ‘tried and tested’
approach with a philosophical basis in tune with my own. It played a significant role in my choice of interviewing as the means of data collection as it is a craft (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009) in which I have some training and experience. Immersing myself in the methodological and ethical literature was an important component of building a solid base for my decision-making, as was regular consultation with my research supervisor. Also important was ongoing consultation with my counselling practice supervisor, a relationship wherein I regularly explore ethical issues in relation to my training practice. Competence also connects with reflexivity. Given the researcher’s role in the construction and communication of research ‘knowledge’, our capacity and willingness to site ourselves transparently within the research is an ethical issue (Etherington, 2007).

The avoidance of harm is a fundamental concern for research ethics committees. Harm can take a variety of forms and the potential harm to participants in qualitative research can be difficult to specify, anticipate and describe (Guillemin and Gillam, 2004). I anticipated that the potential for harm or maleficence in this research study would be minimised by the professional parity between myself and the participants. I also anticipated that counselling trainers would be well-placed to give informed consent. I ensured that they were fully informed about the nature and aims of the research, either on a face-to-face basis, by phone or by email correspondence before signing consent forms (see appendices). As trainers they adhere to the ethical principle of ‘self-respect’, i.e. the duty of self-care, and I hoped this would inform their participation or potential withdrawal. Also if distress was to be manifested, they would have their own support and supervisory networks, which I would encourage them to utilise as appropriate. Moreover, as a trained counsellor, I would be in a position to utilise counselling skills to ascertain whether the interviewee wished to terminate the interview and to offer follow-up support as appropriate. Importantly, I anticipated that the opportunity to reflect on the trainer role would not only be non-harmful but positively beneficial, an important aspect of ethical research.

Relational ethics were of significant concern to issues of beneficence and non-maleficence. ‘Relational ethics requires researchers to act from hearts and minds, acknowledge our interpersonal bonds to others, and take responsibility for actions
and their consequences’ (Ellis, 2007, p.3). Although beginning from a belief that professional parity between myself and the trainers interviewed would lessen the potential for vulnerability, I needed to remain sensitive to potential dynamics between us. As Fontana and Frey (2008) highlight, traditional interviewing can be ‘wittingly or unwittingly’ unethical in its potential for manipulation and objectification of participants. Issues of dual roles and power were pertinent. I had professional connections with a number of the trainers. Moreover, I have experienced status divisions within the training sector as a whole, as well as competitiveness between differing training providers. Such contextual factors were referred to directly by Peggy and Jane during interview. In other interviews, my sense of power issues at play came subsequently on reflection in my journal.

I also wished to respect the trainers’ right to privacy. Ellis (2007) talked of trying within the research process to develop trust by sharing lives but also respecting the needs for privacy and restraint. It is with such a dynamic that I have struggled in my role as a trainer. I had addressed aspects of ‘privacy and restraint’ in my university-based ethics approval process, talking of taking care to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. My proposed actions included limiting the identification of participants to their wider work setting (university, further education, private sector), length and nature of experience as trainers, theoretical orientation, gender and ethnic identity. Also, any reference to students or clientwork would be presented in a general, anonymised manner. A potentially difficult area I highlighted was a disclosure of professional malpractice, as my ethics as a researcher and trainer may come into conflict (B.A.C.P. Research Guideline 3.2). I talked of ensuring in my contracting with participants that they were explicitly made aware of this exemption and the participation consent form delineated ways that I would ensure anonymity.

In practice I found my expressed intentions insufficient. The role of trainer is a public one and some trainers have a very high public profile. Identifying a participant’s wider work setting, training experience, theoretical orientation, gender and ethnic identity could effectively identify some participants. I needed therefore to omit some details freely given. As mentioned earlier, I also decided to conduct a member check, related not to validity but to ethical concerns. I had
concerns that trainers on subsequent reflection might not want certain of their opinions placed in the public arena. I therefore invited feedback on the manner in which they had been identified and interpreted and checked whether they were content with the use of quotes from their interview before this thesis was submitted.
CHAPTER 5 FINDINGS

The interview report is a social construction in which the author’s presentational choices ‘provide a specific view on the subject’s lived world’ (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009, p.267). I return to their analogy of researcher as traveller and in this section I begin the presentation of the collected tales with a clear acknowledgement of my role as their collector, interpreter and communicator.

I wished to present the findings in a way that will resonate with or engage the reader, one of Elliott et al’s (1999) ‘publishability’ guidelines for qualitative research. I aimed to create a text that ‘runs to meet the reader’ rather than erects ‘signposts of impassable terrain’ (Sommer, 1994, p.530). At the same time, I did not want to get caught up in a vanity project. As Geertz (1973) argues, when an interpretation leads us ‘into an admiration of its own elegance, of its author’s cleverness, or the beauties of the Euclidean order – it may have its intrinsic charms; but it is something else than what the task at hand….calls for’ (p.18). Ultimately I have attempted to respond to the recommendation that findings be presented in a coherent form, written in a fluid and lucid writing style and contain sufficient detail and evidence to convince the reader of the credibility of the studies’ findings and interpretation (Elliott et al, ibid).

Thick description (Geertz, 1973) is fundamental to credibility. It captures not only the shades and nuances of experiencing, but acts as a base for thick interpretation and in turn for thick meaning (Ponterotto, 2006).

‘[Thick description] presents detail, context, emotion and the webs of social relationships that join persons to one another. Thick description evokes emotionality and self-feelings. It inserts history into experience. It establishes the significance of an experience, or the sequence of events, for the person or persons in question. In thick description, the voices, feelings, actions, and meanings of interacting individuals are heard.’ (Denzin, 1989, p. 83)

The balancing of analysis and description is a difficult task. Smith et al (2009) describe the results section as substantial and discursive, as interweaving quotes
and commentary, as demonstrating the dialogic, co-constructive nature of the
devour. Relying on too many quotes can appear a defensive act, with the
researcher ‘allowing a plethora of these to do the analyst’s work’ (Smith et al,
2009). The counter-posing danger is a lack of transparency with the reader unable
to assess the trustworthiness of the analysis in terms of its rootedness in the texts.
This challenge is amplified by the need to find an economical means of
communicating patterns and themes and capture the nuances of individual
experience. I also needed to exercise choice in terms of areas that seemed to me
important to highlight and areas that merited lesser discussion and illustration. I
wished to follow Blumer’s (1969) dictum to respect my participants but needed to
acknowledge that I could not pay full respect to all areas of their experience and
understanding.

Such factors have influenced my choice of presentational methods. I have
juxtaposed tables and text as I deemed most appropriate to effective and economic
communication. The studies are presented in four discrete sections, each of which
I start by presenting two summary tables of the overall themes, one focusing on
the understanding of the role, the other on its experiencing. I then go on to
examine each theme in turn. For each theme I include a table and a narrative in
which I ‘address the core of what the participants were thinking and experiencing’
(Smith et al, 2009). I focus on certain areas of experiencing, guided by their
apparent significance within the trainers’ accounts. In this chapter, I stay more
closely with the phenomenological and attempt to balance exploration of
similarities and differences within each study. In the ensuing chapter, I take a
more overtly interpretative stance towards what the studies as a whole can tell us,
as I explore divergences and convergences between the four studies and their
potential meaning.

My attempt to convey the fullness of participants’ experience has led me to stay
with the richness of the language used, whilst acknowledging that some readers
may find elements of the language used unsettling and/or even offensive. It has
also led me to incorporate the use of imagery at points. The imagery can be traced
back quite directly to the words used by trainers, although the images themselves
were chosen by me and hence are co-creations. I move between the use of the
present and past term, echoing the movement of the trainers as they shifted between more immediate description, reflection and remembering. Throughout I have attempted to make transparent the co-constructive nature of the data and its analysis. I have added extracts from my journal in boxes where I deem it helps shed light on my interpretative activity. I remained very aware of this process as an interpretative one albeit one rooted in the words of the participants and also as one that involves art perhaps more than science.

**Some final presentational notes:**

I would like to add here a note about the impact of the hermeneutic circle or the interpretative movement back and forth between the part and the whole of the text(s) on the themes identified. At a micro level, I could find a short extract redolent with nuanced meanings, leading me to ascribe it to a number of subordinate themes. As I circled back and forth within and between texts, I found the same subordinate theme more appropriately placed within differently identified superordinate themes within the different studies. In further relation to the identified themes, they in concert attempt to reflect noema, or what is experienced, as well as noesis, the way it is experienced. Some of my cross-references and illustrations embrace dialogue between myself and the trainers I interviewed. Again this reflects the co-constructed nature of interview knowledge but also the interactive nature of my interview approach.

I would also like to acknowledge my sense of one negative consequence of the exhortation to ‘commit butchery’ at this stage (Smith and Larkin, 2010). Butchery involves a cutting-up of a whole. This cutting-up is reflected in the identifying of separate themes and sub-themes, a presentational device that can obscure their interlinked nature. For instance, trainers in relating their training history talked of the importance of experiential learning within their role. The experiencing and understanding of the role cannot be separated from the wider professionalising context. While I try and ameliorate the impact by making overt the links I have identified, inevitably the presentation of trainers’ accounts in the form of themes is a choice with costs. To continue the butchery metaphor I am displaying joints of meat at the inevitable expense of the living animal:
Diagram 5 Joints of meat
(N.S.W. Public School Cookery Teachers' Association 1971)
### 5.1 PERSON-CENTRED TRAINERS: OVERALL THEMES

Table 6  How person-centred trainers understand their role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate theme</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Being in relationship with students</strong></td>
<td>Four of the five</td>
<td>Using self as a key resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Living a commitment to equality and power-sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Engaging deeply with group processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empowering the individual</strong></td>
<td>Four of the five</td>
<td>Facilitating the development of the person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging independent, autonomous learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Holding and developing practice standards</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Assessing fitness to practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Developing professional awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Developing practice-related skills and knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responding to the wider context</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Balancing responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Acting as a mediator and interface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiating differing cultural and structural terrains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Managing a complexity of demands</strong></td>
<td>Two of the five</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 7 How person-centred trainers experience their role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate theme</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>As personally challenging</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Feeling stretched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling self-critical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling exposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling compromised and constrained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As damaging</strong></td>
<td>Three of the five</td>
<td>Draining of self</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling assaulted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As providing intrinsic reward</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Providing a sense of meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting personal needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Personal growth and fulfilment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Love of the work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As providing a shifting sense of</strong></td>
<td>Four of the five</td>
<td>Reward and challenge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>reward and challenge</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As under threat</strong></td>
<td>Four of the five</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

153
5.2 PERSON-CENTRED TRAINERS’ UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE

5.2.1 Super-ordinate theme: Being in relationship with students

Table 8  Being in relationship with students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All except Diane</td>
<td>Using self as a key resource</td>
<td>All except Diane</td>
<td>Frances (157-166, 189-96, 224-7, 238-247) Peggy (215-221, 231-5, 241-2, 512-3) Teresa (88-9, 94-6) Jane (84-5, 86-91, 335-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All except Diane</td>
<td>Engaging deeply with group processes</td>
<td>All except Diane</td>
<td>Frances (157-165, 213-222, 261-3, 495-511, 541-6) Peggy (135-6, 150-7) Teresa (88-96, 780-794) Jane (47-49, 86-91)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Developing a relationship with students was a key component of the role for four of the five trainers. Reflecting the person-centred approach to counselling, this relationship involves a ‘way of being’ (Rogers, 1980) on the part of the trainer. Given the centrality accorded to relationship within the person-centred approach, perhaps most notable is the absentee, Diane. Although she viewed relationships with students as part of the satisfaction she gains from being a tutor, and therefore by extension, creating relationships as something that takes place, she did not characterise the creation or maintenance of a particular form of relationship as central to her role.

Within the other trainers’ accounts, the relationship is characterised as involving the person of the tutor, as requiring the use of self as a key resource. It is the antithesis of assuming a persona: it is an authentic and transparent giving of self and relating to others. The role focuses on ‘who you are as a person’ [Peggy, 215]. ‘Giving of self’ contains notions of serving others and, most evident in
Peggy’s and Frances’s account, an element of self-sacrifice. Frances evokes a powerful metaphor, invoking deep culturally-held notions of sacrifice:

And she said that she thought the role of the therapist was like Christ on the cross, that basically you were taking on the pain and giving yourself up for it in the hope that or the belief that this would save the other person, if you wanted to use that metaphor ..... I guess I’m trying to bring the same to myself as a tutor or course facilitator. [238-247]

Authenticity and transparency were linked to tutors’ belief in the importance of living a commitment to equality and power-sharing. They saw this as foundational to the empowerment of students and facilitation of their learning. Peggy talked of being committed to power-sharing, facilitating the holding of responsibility by the individual student [208-209]. Jane talked of the importance of congruence in these terms, linking it back to her own learning:

So like in community groups I talk about the stuff going on for me as well, the shit I’m not good at. I do that because it’s part of being in person-centred groups but that’s how I’ve done my learning as well. I haven’t got
a detachedness I think under-involvement is worse than over-involvement. So the relationship is absolutely central. [86-91]

The linking with the third sub-theme ‘engaging deeply with group processes’ is evident in the latter part of the quote from Jane. Tutors viewed the quality of their engagement with the group as critical to their role. The nature of this engagement is one of immersion and proximity rather than detachment and distance. This immersion was seen as demanding of self. It also could be experienced as powerful and painful, as hard emotional labour:

But, you know, and I’m getting slagged from two quarters at the moment, three, for apparently not understanding students on the course and taking other people’s side in things, so what I want to do is say you know, fuck off and grow up, and take some responsibility here, this ain’t me, and I’m fed up of it being dumped... [Frances, 213-217]

5.2.2 Super-ordinate theme: Empowering the individual

Table 9 Empowering the individual

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All except Frances</td>
<td>Facilitating the development of the person</td>
<td>All except Frances</td>
<td>Diane (88-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peggy (33-6, 97-8, 365-6)</td>
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<td>Teresa (638-44, 651-2, 764-5)</td>
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<td>Jane (103-5, 351-6)</td>
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<td>Encouraging independent autonomous learning</td>
<td>Peggy</td>
<td>Peggy (138-9, 365-6)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>Jane (44-5, 95-7)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Empowering the individual student was seen as fundamental to the role. Tutors depicted the learning process for students as autonomous and individualised, and as one involving personal change and development. Their role was to facilitate and encourage that process:
I think whatever subject area within counselling that you’re concentrating on, part of it is developing the personality of the student. [Diane, 88-89]

So as a trainer I really want to facilitate trainees really drawing on their experience and what they think, their morals and their values. [Jane, 95-97]

Frances is missing from this theme, a noteworthy absentee given her powerful commitment to relationship and engagement. Perhaps this can be understood within the context of her sense of professionalisation and regulation as involving loss, reflected in her sense of shifting student motivations:

I mean there were always those who wanted to be counsellors, but now it’s a, you know, people who want to be psychotherapists and counsellors and that’s a career choice, and something’s been lost in that. [673-676]

Alternatively/also it may be a consequence of her assuming common understandings with me as a person-centred trainer, hence leaving things unsaid.
5.2.3 Super-ordinate theme: Holding and developing practice standards

Table 10 Holding and developing practice standards

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
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<td>Assessing fitness to practice</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frances (400-4) Jane (64-8, 78-80, 164-70, 377-83) Teresa (96-7) Peggy (95-8, 102-4, 111-7) Diane (94-8, 103-5, 111,135-8,176-181)</td>
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<td>Developing professional awareness</td>
<td>Diane Peggy Jane</td>
<td>Diane (125-7) Jane (49-55, 299-305) Peggy (50-55)</td>
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<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Developing practice-related skills and knowledge</td>
<td>Peggy Diane Frances Jane</td>
<td>Peggy (29-33, 50-4), Diane (113-6) Frances (73-83) Jane (299-305, 344-8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trainers all viewed the holding and developing of practice standards as part of their brief. Assessing fitness to practice was seen as part of the role with Diane seeing this obligation as stretching back to selection of students with the suitable personal qualities. However, tutors displayed different levels of reconciliation with this. Both Jane and Diane flagged up ease with the concept. Jane saw her capacity to make ethically-based judgments as a plus of working in the independent sector: *Part of my role is to say that people are not fit to practice and I don’t have a university down my neck saying that I must pass them* [377-378].

Frances’ stance was more of a pragmatic acceptance of this aspect of the role, while Peggy indicated significant discomfort with it. She saw assessment and empowerment in conflict: *there is something that is so inherently dichotomous or contradictory about holding that balance* [111-112].

Holding and developing standards of practice was also seen as incorporating the development of students’ awareness of the professional field. Both Peggy and Frances saw this area growing in significance with professionalisation processes.
As with assessment issues, both Jane and Diane signalled a clearer sense of reconciliation with this aspect of the role. Easier to embrace for Peggy and Frances was the development of practice-based skills and understanding. This carried weaker overtones of externally-imposed standards.

...it is very much about facilitating, facilitating the development of skills and knowledge of the round of counselling and psychotherapy. What it is, what it isn’t. Theoretical perspectives. But essentially for me it’s part of…and I guess that’s linked with me being fundamentally person-centred, it’s about playing a part in facilitating the growth of an individual in a way that maximises their potential to be of use as a counsellor or a psychotherapist. [Peggy, 29-33]

5.2.4 Super-ordinate theme: Responding to the wider context

Table 11 Responding to the wider context

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
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<td><em>Balancing different responsibilities</em></td>
<td>Peggy, Frances</td>
<td>Peggy (94-8), Frances (41-44)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td><em>Acting as a mediator and interface</em></td>
<td>Peggy, Frances, Teresa</td>
<td>Peggy (94-8), Frances (135-42), Teresa (74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td><em>Working within differing cultures and systems</em></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Peggy (62-8, 252-70, 294-7, 318-20, 323-332), Teresa (334-40, 374-6, 387-90), Frances (288-93, 304-9, 332-4, 435-8), Jane (384-7, 435-42, 448-65, 477-8, 481-6), Diane (153-4, 294-9, 364-5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trainers placed substantial emphasis on how their role involved interaction with the wider context. Training was not depicted as occurring in a vacuum; it was inherently contextual. This context incorporated a variety of bodies: student bodies, staff teams, departments, managerial systems, institutional settings, professional bodies. These were all seen as bringing particular facets to the
conduct of the role. One was the need to balance differing and often conflicting sets of responsibilities.

That’s the whole thing about having a responsibility to the institution in terms of assessment and quality control for want of a better word and balancing that with a commitment to the growth and development of the individual student. [Peggy, 94-98]

It also required acing as mediator between differing bodies, as well as the negotiation of philosophical and cultural divides. The tutor was characterised as a human ‘buffer zone’, protecting students and upholding a counselling ethos within potentially adverse settings.

It’s a bit like middle-management isn’t it – it’s the worst place to be, because you’re squeezed between two things, so you’re trying to take your responsibilities and some of it is discussions in the university about staffing for example, are not stuff to be shared with the student group. [Frances, 135-138]

Differing settings condition the extent of power and autonomy that tutors perceive themselves as holding. Working within the university sector was largely equated with responding to rather than shaping developments. Tutors experienced greater autonomy within the private sector, although certain challenges such as team dynamics operate cross-sector. Peggy talked of the differing impacts of working within varying settings in terms of their practical requirements, the comfort of the physical setting, a sense of belonging, a sense of energy generated and, importantly, the sense of feeling held.

I think the context in which you’re operating as a trainer is hugely important. It’s a bit like Bowlby’s notion of “good enough parenting” of needing to feel, at some level, held and supported and valued in what you’re doing as a parent to be able to offer good enough parenting. I think as a trainer that’s really important and is one of the biggest challenges because you hardly ever get that. [63-68]
5.2.5 Super-ordinate theme: Managing a complexity of demands

Table 12 Managing a complexity of demands

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teresa</td>
<td>Teresa 66-83, 88-99,261-70</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peggy</td>
<td>Peggy (141-2, 151-171)</td>
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</table>

Although all the accounts catalogued a variety of roles and demands, it was only in two of the accounts, Peggy’s and Teresa’s, that the task of managing all these facets in concert was explicitly highlighted. They highlighted the size and complexity of the role. I choose here a quote from Peggy to illustrate. The density of Peggy’s description mirrors her sense of the character of the task. It does not, however, convey a sense of how or indeed whether she did manage to respond to the demands:

… but it’s such a very particular task that you are setting out to do in counselling training which demands of you an emotional and an intellectual level in a way that’s quite challenging in itself, to be able to work from head/heart simultaneously with a group of people. But then you are also working with the interpersonal stuff going on within the group. You’re working the entrapped personal stuff that’s happening powerfully for each individual that’s involved in that. You’re interfacing with your colleagues…. you’re working with each of the trainees from an intellectual and an emotional level, their interpersonal/intrapersonal. There’s the stuff between you and your co-tutor and then the interface with the institution. Again, at lots of different levels in terms of your own department and then the context that department is set within. All of those fields are going to be affecting and also with B.A.C.P. or to B.A.C.P. and their code of ethics. If you work on an accredited course their specific requirements in terms of the criteria you meet. So, it’s a bloody nightmare really, isn’t it? [151-171]
5. 3 PERSON-CENTRED TRAINERS’ EXPERIENCE OF THE ROLE

5.3.1 Super-ordinate theme: As a personal challenge

Table 13 As a personal challenge

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td></td>
<td>Feeling stretched</td>
<td>All except Frances</td>
<td>Teresa (88-96, 189-191, 676-8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frances</td>
<td>Jane (456-9)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peggy</td>
<td>(141-2, 176-79, 556-66)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diane</td>
<td>(351-2, 695-9)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling self-critical</td>
<td>Frances, Peggy</td>
<td>Frances (445-6, 448-51, 497-500, 551-2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peggy (107-11, 119-121)</td>
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<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Feeling vulnerable</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Peggy (62-8, 235-242)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Frances</td>
<td>(167-70, 352-6, 435-8, 602-5)</td>
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<td>Jane</td>
<td>(364-8, 401-5, 432-42)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teresa</td>
<td>(545-7)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diane</td>
<td>(732-4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Feeling responsible</td>
<td>Frances, Diane, Teresa</td>
<td>Frances (497-50, 551-2)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Diane (732-4)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teresa (255-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling compromised and constrained</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Frances (304-9, 332-3, 435-8)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teresa</td>
<td>(577-8, 615-7)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diane</td>
<td>(771-7)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jane</td>
<td>(65-7)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peggy</td>
<td>(261-9, 332-4, 436-444)</td>
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All tutors experienced the role as challenging. This challenge was experienced both negatively and positively. The most positive experiencing came from the sense of being stretched by the role and the potential that brought to realise more of your potential as a human being. Teresa talks, for instance of how it has led her to relate more closely to others:

*I work hard on being contactful and that’s probably one of the things that has been hardest for me to learn. There’s something about the work that demands and that is a gift to me because it forces contact and forces connection.* [Teresa, 189-191]
Challenge was also experienced as being pleasurable. Diane enjoyed her sense of feeling stretched:

*Even the challenges of it - with personal development work, where there’s upsets and students are finding things difficult, where there’s issues to sort out because there’ve been placement problems and things like that, I really enjoy all that.* [695-699]

Other less comfortable sensations, however, were associated with the role. Feeling stretched could be experienced negatively. Some sense of vulnerability accompanied the role for all tutors. Lack of safety contributed to this; tutors could feel unsupported by their institution and devalued by it. The (literally at times) up-front nature of the role led to a sense of exposure. Tutors could feel vulnerable not only to students’ judgments but to those of other staff within their setting and beyond. Peggy and Frances referred to the vulnerability to complaint. Peggy’s lived experience of complaint informs her:

*And the lived experience of how very vulnerable... from my having made that comment about struggling myself to come to grips with the complexities of the course programme and then that being used by a student as a basis for a threat of complaint against me.* [235-239]

‘Feeling self-critical’ refers to the way that tutors judge themselves also. Peggy disliked the part of herself that came to the fore in the assessment role. Frances wanted to dissociate herself from her impact on students, particularly her capacity to hurt. Feeling responsible was an experience evident in Frances’s and, to a lesser extent, Diane and Teresa’s accounts. Frances concentrated on her sense of responsibility for her part in interpersonal dynamics. Diane connected it more with a sense of aloneness within her institution and her need at times to assume a large amount of responsibility. Teresa saw the sense of responsibility in part as a personal characteristic that the role could play into:
I have worked with co-workers where I’ve sort of taken over because I haven’t really trusted them or the disparity of knowledge and ability has just been too much, I just end up taking over. [255-258]

All tutors experienced feeling compromised and constrained. The identified source of this was the wider context – sometimes a co-tutor, often the institution or professional body. Jane identified the importance of being in the private sector – she used the term the ‘independent’ sector throughout – in her maintenance of a prized sense of autonomy. The intensity of this feeling varied from participant to participant. It was a strong theme for Frances, Teresa, and Peggy, tipping towards a sense of disempowerment at a strong personally-felt level. At times, this brought their experiencing nearer the injurious. For Diane it stayed on the level of the only blot on the horizon, really [800].

5.3.2 Super-ordinate theme: As damaging

Table 14 As damaging

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
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<td>Draining of self</td>
<td>Frances</td>
<td>Frances (564-70)</td>
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<td>Peggy (472-8, 512-22, 537-40, 574-6)</td>
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<td>Teresa</td>
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<td>Teresa (314-21, 506-7, 617-20)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frances</td>
<td>Feeling assaulted</td>
<td>Frances</td>
<td>Frances (497-500, 551-2)</td>
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<td>Peggy</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teresa (577-82, 615-7)</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Peggy (90-3)</td>
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This theme did not appear in all five accounts. It was markedly absent in Diane’s account. She viewed the role overall as deeply rewarding. Jane’s account was similar: although recognising challenges, she saw herself as fed by the role.

Frances, Peggy and Teresa differed in that they had experienced the role as at differing points and in differing measures as causing them damage. The experience of giving of self could tip into a sense of loss of self. All three had felt drained at points by the role. This transformed into a sense of feeling emptied by
the interpersonal demands of the role. Peggy saw herself becoming passive and she linked this with gender:

... tiredness and stress and personal tendency all conspired to the fact that I think I became quite passive in my intent, my desire to be there for the other in the purpose of, in the service of the other, and I wonder whether this, I wonder whether there’s a very particular gender aspect to the impact of being a counselling trainer, because, and a person-centred counselling trainer, because we’re en-culturated to be in the service of others, that at some level, that’s our whole raison-d’etre still as women. [468-476]

Frances talked of a sense of disappearing, connecting it with deep ontological issues. I include the short but, for me, powerful interchange [564-569]:

**Frances:** ...I disappear.

**Liz:** Right. You disappear.

**Frances:** I disappear. All things to all people.

**Liz:** So it’s a threat of disappearing.

**Frances:** Yeah. And that, I mean, you know, my fear of death is not about dying and all the rest of it it’s about my space closing, you disappear, so that that’s a...

Feeling assaulted evoked anger, even rage, as well as causing a sense of woundedness. Assaults were mainly depicted as coming from without. Teresa’s words communicate how a lived sense of powerlessness assaulted her sense of self:

*When I’m not heard I just feel pissed off. I feel like I want to resign and slap somebody’s face. When I get put on a committee which is the last committee in the world that I would want to go and I’m just told I’m going on it, I resent so much that somebody can do that. It’s like it’s not what I live. Down the hill, in our area, that’s not what we live and it’s not what we do.* [577-582]
However, assaults on self could come from within and at points, Frances’s and Peggy’s self-criticism moved towards self-rejection.

### 5.3.3 Super-ordinate theme: Providing intrinsic rewards

#### Table 15 Providing intrinsic rewards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
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<td>Jane (770-5, 790-8)</td>
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<td>Meeting personal needs</td>
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<td>Teresa (689-93)</td>
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<td>Jane (399-400)</td>
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Alongside depletion and debilitation runs a powerful sense of the rewarding nature of the role. These rewards were not depicted largely in terms of money or status, although Teresa acknowledged that working in a higher education setting had brought such rewards and a sense of pride in her achievements.

The role was imbued with meaning for all tutors. Teresa talked in terms of a sense of calling. Jane talked of her passion and of it 'saving her life'. Frances equated it with her idealism. For Diane, the meaning was more of a personal/professional one, as her involvement in training had brought a new lease of life to her career in education. For all of the trainers except Diane, it was not involvement with
training per se, that was meaningful; it was its person-centred nature that gave it its meaning.

*I really believe in relational counselling and sometimes I have this wish of ‘let me go back to xxxxx and really help people’ and then I think actually, this is where I’m using my skills and I’m helping change people to relate in ways that makes changes to who they relate to, and I am making a difference in the world.* [Teresa, 649-654]

The sub-themes are all again interwoven, albeit in differing ways for trainers. A range of personal needs are met alongside a need for meaning. Being part of a developmental process, engaging in rewarding authentic relationships, being challenged to grow and develop – all were seen as meeting personal needs and promoting personal growth and fulfilment. All this fed into a sense of love for the role for trainers.

*... there’s something exhilarating about it, there’s something incredibly life-enhancing about it. Feeling as though you’re working with all parts of you flowing together and switched on and, you know, here. I really, really love that.* [Peggy, 562-566]

Frances’s account is missing a sense of fulfilment or love of role. She talked of finding meaning in the role, but not of fulfilment within or love for the work. She alluded to how her personal life and professional life were interwoven, with a sense that deficits in her personal life were being met in the training role, but also colouring her experience of it. Her comments link with the following theme - that of a shifting sense of reward, as she acknowledges her current lack of optimism.

*I’ve lost my optimism, and so there’s some truth on that throughout it all, I can’t - and I think that’s age, experience, training experience and life experience.* [664-666]
5.3.4 Super-ordinate theme: A shifting sense of reward and challenge

Table 16 A shifting sense of reward and challenge

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<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
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Trainers’ experienced their sense of the role’s rewards and challenges as varying over time. Tutors linked this with developments within the work context. At other times it was more explicitly linked with a shift in their perception. Sometimes it was both.

Frances and Peggy talked of a long-term decline in their sense of work satisfaction. Peggy talked of something becoming lost: *And I lost, by the end of it, although there was still this sense of, you know, caring about the students, I had lost that felt sense of working from the heart*... [596-599].

Frances pointed up a dulling sense of repetition in the role stemming from her length of involvement. Both looked back to an earlier period when the training experience felt more imbued with a sense of meaning.

Temporal shifts could be more short-term and overtly reflect trainers’ moves across settings or between tasks. Teresa’s experience of validating a course in an institutional context, for instance, was intensely stressful. *I wouldn’t do the job if we kept on having that kind of thing happening that’s been happening over the last term or two of going through this process* [617-619].

Tutors experienced group dynamics as enervating or draining at different points. Tutors experienced settings differently. The private sector, for instance, was equated with the reward of greater freedom but at the cost of financial security. At the same time, settings within the same sector were experienced as providing differing levels of support, valuing and holding. Peggy, Jane and Teresa all
highlighted how the quality of relationships within the staff team had conditioned their experiences.

*I worked in xxxxxx College that I thought was appalling and that was to do with the relationships with the staff, not particularly the college. I think the staff dynamics make a huge .....that’s this gender stuff. I worked with this particular trainer who was very threatened by me ... who insisted he gave me supervision because there was something wrong with me, just bonkers really.* [Jane, 434-439]

Although recognising ups and downs in her experience as trainer, Diane’s account demonstrated the most consistency. Her experience was one of abiding reward. Other accounts contain more movement. Impacting currently to differing degrees on the sense of the role’s rewards and challenges was the uncertainty being engendered by the prospect of state regulation.

### 5.3.5 Super-ordinate theme: As under threat

**Table 17 As under threat**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key cross-references</th>
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</table>
| All but Teresa | Peggy (394-7, 405-8, 419-20, 613-8)  
Frances (380-88, 391-2, 398-413, 671-6)  
Jane (557-63, 569-73, 819-822, 846-8, 601-5)  
Diane (317-334) |

All but Teresa expressed a sense of threat connected with changes in the wider counselling context, although its extent and nature was perceived differently by individual trainers. Peggy, Frances and Jane expressed the strongest sense of threat, seeing a move towards regulation as a force that constrained, diminished and threatened the future of person-centred counselling and training. Again, religious imagery was evoked:

*There’s a poem by Blake which is about the Church and religion and I can’t remember the poem, but it’s about walking in a graveyard and seeing the*
church and the graves are bound about with, and what it’s bound about with is the strictures of religion, and I feel that, I feel that now about the world of counselling and psychotherapy, that it’s all behind, bound about with barbed wire and brambles and fences. [Peggy, 613-618]

Jane anticipated constraint coming from a move towards university-based training as a norm. She saw such a setting as antithetical to relationship-based training.

From what I’ve heard and experienced in certain university settings it is like if I am frightened of being, God, then that is going to affect my congruence and intimacy in the relationship and thus how do I model being intimate in the counselling relationships if I’m not doing it in the student relationship? And that’s pretty fundamental to me. [559-563]

The sense of pressure and constraint was entwined with a sense of loss or its potential. Counselling and counselling training would be diminished: something important was going to be lost in this process. For Peggy it was something precious – the heart and soul [407-408] of counselling. Frances saw a loss of idealism in students as they increasingly looked to counselling as a career path. For Diane and Jane, the potential loss was of counsellors from working-class backgrounds and/or minority ethnic groups. At its extreme, the threat was perceived as pertaining to the continued existence of person-centred counselling and training. Peggy voiced her sense of a generalised fear: There’s also fear
around in terms of person-centred therapy having disappeared in the States, there’s real fear that’s going to happen here [395-397].

Accompanying the sense of threat was a sense of the period as one of change. This change was provoking personal reflection for four of the five trainers. Existential questions were being raised related to meaning, purpose and ways forward. Jane talked of regulation acting as personal punctuation [808]. All were questioning their place and coming to differing conclusions.
## 5.4 INTEGRATIVE TRAINERS: OVERALL THEMES

Table 18 How integrative trainers understand their role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate theme</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Creating and maintaining a learning</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Embedding a set of values</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>environment</td>
<td></td>
<td>Using self as a key resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Creating and maintaining relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitating personal learning &amp; development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging critical thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Holding and containment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Monitoring and assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintaining &amp; developing standards</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Developing practitioners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing a Matrix of demands</td>
<td>Three of the</td>
<td>Managing the scale of the demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>four</td>
<td>Negotiating conflicting demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Working with limitation and constraint</td>
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</table>

Table 19 How integrative trainers experience their role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate theme</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>As difficult to grasp</td>
<td>Two of the four</td>
<td>Feeling inadequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling vulnerable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling depleted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling compromised &amp; constrained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As challenging of self</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>As meeting personal needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoying the work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Engendering personal growth and development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As unsatisfying</td>
<td>Two of the four</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As personally rewarding</td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As currently uncertain</td>
<td>All</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.5 INTEGRATIVE TRAINERS’ UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE

5.5.1 Super-ordinate theme: Creating a learning environment

Table 20  Creating a learning environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td><em>Embedding a set of values</em></td>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Steve (188-200, 226-8, 301, 355-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Laura (231-4, 288-92, 432-4, 716-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Employing self as a key resource</em></td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Andy (103-5, 121-2, 135-43, 272-5, 533-6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Laura (579-80, 582-7, 603-7, 616-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Creating and maintaining relationships</em></td>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Steve (325, 487-491)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Laura (230-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Facilitating personal learning &amp; development</em></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Steve (188-90, 314-7, 722-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Laura (195-9, 221-4, 236-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Frank (108-110, 599-607)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Andy (153-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Encouraging critical thinking</em></td>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Steve (288-91, 729-31)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Frank (270-5, 280-84)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Andy (153-5, 347-50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>Holding and containment</em></td>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Laura 41-3, (230-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Steve (675-9, 755-8)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The integrative trainers were united in wanting to build a learning environment characterised by certain qualities and purposes. The balance of qualities varied for trainers. For Laura and Steve of central concern was the living out of a set of values in the context of their relationships with students. Laura’s expressed values centred on authenticity, integrity and the potential for self-actualisation. Steve’s focused on the importance of encouraging and valuing the individual and of training focused on the development of individual potential.

Laura saw a strong role for herself as tutor in holding and containing both individuals and group processes in a supportive and challenging manner. Steve talked of containing a group in more cognitive terms: … *part of the role is paying*
attention to the group process and the individual processes and you need to sort of get to know them and keep an eye on them. [755-756]

Andy talked directly of the role requiring a totality of personal commitment:

*I think as a trainer you give of yourself the whole of you, and you hope that that’s enough [laughter] you know and that includes the knowledge, the skills, you know the understanding – you know there’s a lot, there’s lots of elements to it, but it, for me in the end it comes down to you.* [272-275]

Both Laura and Andy acknowledged their importance as models for students. Andy in particular saw this as crucial, linking it to his gender: … and in terms of modelling a kind of maleness that can be stereotyped and challenging that maybe – hopefully – yeah [533-535].

The prime focus of the endeavour was promoting students’ personal learning and development, seen as central to becoming a proficient counsellor by all the tutors. There was some difference in the emphasis placed on the importance of encouraging critical thinking on the part of students. For Frank and Steve it was crucial. Steve pointed to its importance not only to theory and practice but in terms of self-questioning on the part of students. Frank, however, experienced a tension between the encouragement of critical thinking and the holding and containing aspect of the role, which he viewed as potentially infantilising of students.

*There is a sense in which – I dunno, this is interesting isn’t it – trainees as babies or children, you know the idea that people have got to be nurtured and taken through basics, and taken up the academic levels, and when you’ve mastered a level then you can look back and question it all.* [280-284]
5.5.2 Super-ordinate theme: Teaching

Table 21 Teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key cross-references</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Steve (241-44, 263-81, 288-91)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Frank (196-203, 501-5)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Laura (310-6, 331-3, 716-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Andy (294-301)</td>
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</table>

Although the emphasis was on learning, all the tutors saw their role as to some degree encompassing teaching or lecturing. Steve believed that lectures could be a way of communicating the richness of theory. He used his experience as trainee to inform his understanding of the role. He thought it lacked some formal didactic input, leading to a lack of richness of understanding.

*I rather like the opportunity to be able to explain theory in ways that I thought would be accessible to the audience, and so I quite like being able to almost sort of lecture on particular theory or part of a theory.* [263-265]

While acknowledging the place of teaching, both Frank and Laura had a much more ambivalent relationship with it as an activity. Frank saw it as going against his learning style, as potentially stifling of creativity and critical thinking. It also bored him. Laura and Andy’s responses were more connected with their sense of their areas of competence. Both felt much more at ease teaching skills rather than theory.
5.5.3 Super-ordinate theme: Maintaining and developing standards

Table 22  Maintaining and developing standards

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Monitoring and assessment</td>
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<td>Laura (158-64,167-185, 251-4, 270-304)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Frank (60-1, 73-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developing practitioners</td>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Steve (532-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Laura (205-9, 211-15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Frank (75-7, 88-90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Andy (156-61, 202-7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All tutors saw their role as encompassing the maintenance and development of standards, although there were differences between tutors as to what they believed this encompassed. Laura and Frank both accepted monitoring and assessment as part and parcel of the role. Laura felt this aspect of the role was on the rise:

*I feel actually increasingly that’s a massive part of my role, and I do feel there’s much more of a policing element, particularly with the gold book and the move towards regulation and statutory and all the rest of it. I guess. I feel much more like I’m acting as a policeman. That’s increased.* [160-164]

However, she communicated a strong sense of ambivalence about this. She questioned her entitlement as well as expressing her sense of responsibility. She also saw constraints on its undertaking within the university setting: *I feel hugely ambivalent about my role as gatekeeper and I don’t know that universities are equipped actually to be the gatekeeper* [173-175].

Developing the standards of individual students’ practice was something to which all tutors were committed. For Laura, Steve and Andy, the development of the individual student was seen as key to any holding and developing of standards. Andy focused on the importance of the giving of himself in enabling students to develop as effective practitioner. Steve’s account was dominated by the importance of creating a learning environment within which the individual student
could reach his full potential. Laura saw ethical, competent practice as coming from within the person of the counsellor. I quote her again here, reflecting the power of her voice in this area:

*I feel I can watch people become professional - in my terms – counsellors. But I guess I don’t mean professional as in statutory regulation, gatekeepers – I mean people who understand ethics, supervision, what clients need, organisations – they can operate as competent counsellor.* [206-209]

### 5.5.4 Super-ordinate theme: Managing a matrix of demands

#### Table 23 Managing a matrix of demands

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td>All except Andy</td>
<td>Managing the scale of the demands</td>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Steve (402-5, 436-48)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Laura (225-30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Frank (408-15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negotiating conflicting demands</td>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>Frank (63-71, 78-83, 98-100, 123-6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Laura(63-65, 470-488, 507-24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Frank (78-83, 108-110, 225-36, 309-315)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Steve (505-17,780-2)</td>
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</table>

Three of the four tutors viewed the role as requiring management skills in order to respond effectively to the matrix of the role’s demands. Demands arising from the setting figured highly alongside those arising from the student body, professional organisations, and from within the self. One source of challenge was the sheer scale of demands, which figured highly in Laura’s account. Steve identified with the description of trainers as engaged in a *benign self-slavery process* [438]. Frank and Steve both recognised that their needs and demands were part of the matrix of demands to be managed: *then there’s a process of demand, so coming from myself as it were, so it’s, it’s almost in way a self-created, or self-driven process.* [Steve, 402-403].
Demands could be seen as conflicting. Living with a sense of tension is evident in the accounts. So there’s a tension – there’s what B.A.C.P. says, there’s what the University wants, there are my observations and colleagues’ and any group of students is different from another, and yeah… [Frank, 98-100].

Tutors generally saw working within institutions as involving compromise on their part and of living with constraints arising from working within institutional policies, procedures, structures and a physical environment which could feel at odds with the needs of counselling training. Management skills could be turned inwards in terms of tutors attempting to manage their responses or outwards in attempts to ameliorate the demands themselves. Frank talked of needing to make choices in terms of what he prioritised. Here Laura talks of her strategies for managing the university setting:

... to try and pre-empt some of it, or predict some of it, based on what you know – so like I know enrolment is always an issue, and we’ve got a new administrator, so I know I’m going to have to sit with them and say this is what we need to do, this is what I need you to do, and speak to registry, so I know that some of what I’m going to have to do is behind the scenes. [545-549]
5.6 INTEGRATIVE TRAINERS’ EXPERIENCE OF THE ROLE

5.6.1 Super-ordinate theme: As difficult to grasp

Table 24 As difficult to grasp

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Steve (39-40, 325-6, 381-4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andy</td>
<td>Andy (85-90,149-156, 263-9)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Although an explicit theme in only two of the accounts, the experience of the role as difficult to grasp encapsulated other themes related to the intensity and complexity of the role. It also caught the sense of the interplay between cognitive and emotional tasks in the construction of a learning environment.

Steve and Andy’s accounts come from two different starting-points. Andy’s training had been psychodynamic and his previous role had been as a tutor on a psychodynamic programme in the private sector. He felt he needed to learn what an integrative trainer was. An added complexity was that simultaneously he had shifted to a university setting.

No it’s not just about being in a new place. That’s there as well – I think there are particularly, particular challenges for me about working in a university setting, but I think that’s – I think you can separate that out from the challenges of working on an integrative course, and I think it’s only now that I’m beginning to unravel some of that – I’m not saying I’ve unravelled it, but I’m just beginning to unravel some of it and have a better sense of what integration means – both intellectually and in terms of my experience. [263-269]

Steve had trained on an integrative course and talked of this in terms of ‘an apprenticeship in observing, you know, having gone through the counselling training’ [139-140]. However, he found himself unprepared for the lived experience:
I think the first challenge as such – in a way it doesn’t come as a surprise – is the more you do the work, the more you realise it’s more difficult than it looks, from as an apprentice, or as a student. I think that that’s – that comes as no surprise but it’s still, nonetheless, it’s quite a powerful learning. [381-384]

This learning experience was not just cognitive: it is experienced emotionally. Steve talked of being brought face to face with his anxieties - ‘you begin to meet yourself a bit’ [414]. Andy talked of a sense of feeling lost, of having lost a firmness of footing.

5.6.2 Super-ordinate theme: As challenging of self

Table 25 As challenging of self

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Feeling inadequate</td>
<td>Laura, Andy</td>
<td>Laura (319-20, 331-7, 343-6) Andy (80-84, 109-11, 294-300)</td>
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<td>Feeling vulnerable</td>
<td>Laura, Frank, Andy</td>
<td>Laura (331-7, 343-6, 351, 591, 611-14) Frank (623-7) Andy(344-7,386-8, 456-8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling depleted</td>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Steve (386-7, 391, 423-5, 430-2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling compromised and constrained</td>
<td>Frank, Laura</td>
<td>Laura (370-1, 374-80, 409-12) Frank (225-7, 23-3, 268-70, 288-91, 369-76, 433-6,623-7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All tutors experienced the role as posing challenges to their sense of self and their sense of personal comfort. Such challenges came in a number of forms and varied in intensity for individual tutors. Laura and Andy experienced a sense of inadequacy in parts of the role and a consequent vulnerability, intensified by the public nature of the role. The sense of vulnerability and exposure was also evident.
in Frank’s account. This embraces fear of complaint. Frank tells here of his experience of disclosing his reaction to a student in a group setting:

...and I said it because it was there – you know, there is this image I want to tell you this, then afterwards I thought – oh shit, I wish I hadn’t said that, why did I say that? She’ll misunderstand it, I’ll get into trouble – wurr-wurr-wurr – you know. [623-625]

Laura felt at times overwhelmed by her workload, especially the administration, as well as feeling she had to carry too much responsibility. Andy found the challenge to his sense of self at times overwhelming. A sense of depletion ran through Steve’s account. I include the following extract from my journal as salient. A fore-understanding I am bringing to the analysis is actually hindsight – I know that Steve left the trainer role sometime after the interview. I include it to acknowledge my ‘in-ness’ in this research and the temporal context of this study.

22 May 2011
This time when I return to his account I am struck by his tiredness, had enoughness – meaning jumps out at me now that I know he really has had enough and is leaving the job.

The sense of compromise and constraint was strong in Frank and Laura’s account. For Laura, it was the institutional context that dominated and feeling the need to compromise on values that are important to her.

Laura: So I’ve found ways round it – I don’t pull people in, I do things and then I go ‘by the way I’ve just failed this person’, or I wrote to x. last time, said I want to do this, is this going to be alright? I wrote to xx, our registrar, and said the same, and they now present a fait accompli. But I don’t like that because I like to be transparent and I like to be -

Liz: It also sounds like you like to be straight?
Laura: I do like to be straight – I’m very straight. [376-382]
For Frank it felt more global, as if the whole field of training had become experienced as a constraint.

5.6.3 Super-ordinate theme: As unsatisfying

Table 26 As unsatisfying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key cross-references</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Steve</td>
<td>Steve (636-42, 651-61)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank</td>
<td>Frank (365-9, 372-4, 381-4, 398-400, 640-2, 645-7)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The role, while bringing rewards and challenge in differing measure, could be experienced as, on balance, not rewarding enough. Both Steve and Frank were finding the role to differing degrees unsatisfying in its totality. There were different nuances to this. For Frank, there was a sense that he had always felt slightly at odds in the counselling world but that such feelings had become intensified. He saw his interests as having shifted and the role as no longer fitting his sense of what he wanted to do:

\[
I \text{ don't know – well it's, I really don't want to be there – I don't want to stand here talking to you about some old boring aspect of counselling. It's not – it doesn't feel lively, spontaneous – it feels like a tired old subject. [645-647]}
\]

The strength of feeling was less evident in Steve’s account. For Steve, it was more a sense of the role no longer being satisfying enough, that at some point in the past he had felt differently. He introduced his feelings of ‘enough’ by alluding to others:
Steve: Yes, absolutely, yeah. So that when they’ve – the people I’m thinking of, there was two of them – when they’ve had the opportunity to leave, in both cases it was retirement, yes, they’d done so with a sense of they’ve done enough.

Liz: Right. Right. And do you ever feel like that, that you’ve done enough?

Steve: Frequently. [636-642]

Both accounts pointed to the sense of trainers having a lifespan with a shifting sense of the role’s rewards and challenges.

5.6.4 Super-ordinate theme: As personally rewarding

Table 27 As personally rewarding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| All          | Meeting personal needs and wants | All          | Steve (355-9, 473-6)  
Andy (364-78, 388-93, 401-5, 414-5, 422-4)  
Frank(329-335)  
Laura (729-33,739-42) |
| Laura Andy   | Enjoying what you do                     | Laura (200-1,703-7,715-6, 782-6, 805-7)  
Andy (388-97) |
| Andy Steve Laura | Engendering personal growth and development | Steve (386-7, 391, 423-5, 430-2)  
Laura (742-6, 754-8, 770-3)  
Andy (103-5, 326-8, 489-90, 494-8, 719-21) |

All trainers took rewards of some sort from the role, although some trainers accessed this more easily and readily than others. Personal needs for status and income were met. For Frank and Andy it was the chance to shine, to be a star, to be admired. For Laura and Steve, it gave the opportunity to relate to people in a way they valued. Both Andy and Laura took a sense of enjoyment from
undertaking the role. Laura gave the sense of delight in the role, of loving the work in its entirety, in contrast to Steve and Frank’s experiencing.

No there’s days when I think I love this job, you can’t drag me away from it, I want to do it until I drop dead or retire. [703-704]

Steve was still able to identify taking rewards from the role, particularly in terms of his own development. For Andy, personal growth and development was the most significant reward of the role. Although the process had at times been painful, he saw it as helping him build more solid personal foundations, become more complete as a person.

That’s how I saw it – was that it was, you know I came with half of me, fell apart, tried to start rebuilding it, and I’m in that process now. Now I don’t know there might be a point in the future where I go through something similar again – I don’t know. It just feels like the foundation’s a little bit more firm, whereas before they were a bit wobbly. A lot wobbly. So I couldn’t build. [494-498]

5.6.5 Super-ordinate theme: As currently uncertain

Table 28 As currently uncertain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Andy (571-83, 585-94, 598-607, 612, 624-9)</td>
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<td>Laura (190-3, 625-31, 633-40, 655-9,664-7, 683-6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steve (559-67, 590-600, 606-9)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frank (442-456)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

An air of uncertainty permeated the accounts. For all but Frank this was largely connected with concerns about the impact of regulation. For Andy and Laura a sense of potential loss was intertwined with a sense that counselling could become diminished by the restrictions and constrictions that might follow. Access was an important issue for Laura. By concentrating training into universities, access would be restricted.
I think we risk losing that intuitive, doorstep counselling, you know. If you haven’t got three degrees and a PhD are we going to stop – are we not going to let you in? [634-640]

Steve saw a potential loss of idealism amongst students, with the rise of people seeing counselling in career terms. For him, this led to a lesser sense of engagement. Andy saw restriction in terms of counselling potentially becoming standardised and based round a medical model, losing the richness and uniqueness of what counsellors offer.

I think we do something that is unique and it’s that uniqueness about what we do that I fear might get lost, and that we’ll just become second class psychologists or third class, or fourth class. [589-592]

At the same time, trainers demonstrated a readiness to look at regulation’s potential benefits. Laura thought more placement and job opportunities might follow. Andy acknowledged the desire to protect clients, while still doubting whether it would:

I’m not sure whether that doing what they’re doing does provide safety and there doesn’t seem to be any research or evidence from other professions that this actually does provide safety for clients, so – you know, again, not sure about that one. [Andy, 573-576]

Steve was also ready to doubt his conclusions, wondering whether he was being over-judgmental and/or pessimistic. Frank’s uncertainty focused more on his future direction.
### 5.7 Psychodynamic trainers: overall themes

#### Table 29 How psychodynamic trainers understand their role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate theme</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being in relationship with students</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Using self as a key resource, Modelling, Holding and containing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitating a learning process</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Orchestrating learning, Structuring and managing the curriculum, Facilitating the development of the person, Encouraging independent, autonomous learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatekeeping</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Recruiting, Assessing and monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacting with the wider context</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Dealing with its deficiencies, Working with limits to autonomy, Coping with resultant pressures, Responding to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Championing an ethos</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superordinate theme</td>
<td>Contributors</td>
<td>Subordinate themes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As personally challenging</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Feeling pressured</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Feeling vulnerable</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Feeling burdened</td>
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<td>Feeling worn down</td>
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<td>Feeling stretched</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling unsupported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As costly</td>
<td>Two of the three</td>
<td>Feeling exhausted</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Feeling ill</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Losing motivation and sense of competence</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>As painful</td>
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<tr>
<td>As rewarding</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Providing a sense of meaning</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting personal needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Personal development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoyment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As one of shifting extremes</td>
<td>Two of the three</td>
<td>Uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As in transition</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Threat</td>
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</table>
5.8 PSYCHODYNAMIC TRAINERS’ UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE

5.8.1 Super-ordinate theme: Being in relationship with students

Table 31 Being in relationship with students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>All</td>
<td>Using self as a key resource</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Lynne (294-6, 687-92, 1657-9, 1806-9)</td>
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<td>Sue (218-20, 226-9, 241-44, 244-6, 288-94)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary (688-90, 695-6, 707-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Modelling</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Sue (214-20, 223-4, 226-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lynne (842-44, 1479-82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary (139-42)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Holding and containing</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Lynne (444-50, 455-9, 480-4, 512-27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sue (226-9, 248-50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary (121-3, 129-33, 154-7, 163-4)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All three tutors emphasised the importance of the relationships they had with trainees to the learning process. These relationships were both with individual students and with groups as a whole. The three tutors placed different emphases, however, on what such relationships entailed and their overall significance in the training process. While Lynne and Sue displayed commonality in their approach, Mary’s view on her role differed quite substantially.

Lynne and Sue saw the role as requiring them to bring themselves in an authentic, personal and, within bounds, self-disclosing manner. The bounds were linked to the perceived function of trainer-as-model. Both Lynne and Sue viewed modelling as important, with Sue according it centrality:

*I suppose that the main thing for me is something about trying to “be” or model a way of thinking and an approach, I suppose particularly around trying to demonstrate that interactions can be thought about and to demonstrate some capacity to seek understanding and also to look at myself.* [214-217]
Following from this, Sue and Lynne saw it their responsibility to reflect on the appropriateness of their responses and, where necessary, to contain what might feel an authentic and spontaneous response. The emphasis was different in Mary’s account. Mary focused more on bringing a personal passion and enthusiasm for counselling to the role in order to engage students and enliven learning. Modelling was about transmitting an openness to new ways of thinking and practicing, rather than demonstrating a willingness to self-disclose.

But I think you can tell when the actual passion about it isn’t there and I think passion is a better word than enthusiasm. If the passion isn’t there that’s what students will constantly remark on. It’s the enthusiasm and the passion that engages them. I think you lose them if it’s not there. [707-710]

All three tutors viewed the holding and containment of individuals and groups as another important component of the role, in terms of providing a safe environment for students to work through intrapersonal and interpersonal issues brought up as part of the training experience. Both Lynne and Sue’s accounts highlight the difficulties inherent in undertaking such a role. Difficult interchanges with students were part of the process, requiring them to contain and hold their spontaneous responses:

Trying to, you know, think when receiving all these painful and difficult projections, for example, or trying to look at ...well, you know, this student has come to me with “X” and my reaction is to say “Oh, piss off and leave me alone.” But I think about it and respond in a more contained way. [Sue, 226-229]

Mary’s account talked more of using humour and making learning fun in order to make the learning process more manageable for students themselves. She also talked of the importance of balancing support and challenge. All three tutors talked of the importance of providing support for students on an individual basis.
5.8.2 Super-ordinate theme: Facilitating a learning process

Table 32 Facilitating a learning process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Orchestrating learning</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Lynne (307-313, 415-24) Mary (100-4, 187-193, 263-73) Sue (283-88, 808-10)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Structuring, delivering and managing the curriculum</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Lynne (341-8, 391-8, 407-413, 490-5, 527-33, 1145-55) Mary (129-32, 170-75, 187-93) Sue (221-4, 232-6, 810-23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitating personal change and development</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Sue (235-6) Lynne (416-20) Mary (175-7, 270-3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging independent autonomous learning</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Lynne (416-20, 912-26) Mary (100-4) Sue (281-88)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All three tutors emphasised the importance of a facilitative approach rather than a didactic approach in training. In parallel, the students’ learning process was placed at the centre. This process was viewed as unique to the individual and focused on personal change and development. The tutors viewed themselves as, in various ways and in differing degrees, agents of such change. Sue depicted this as being part of a creative process, using her previous experience as a musician in an orchestra as an analogy:
So that the thing I like most about music is playing in an orchestra and although you’ve got shared music it’s about how you interact and listen to the other players and relate to one another to produce something that’s coherent. I think that that’s what I find provides the creative challenges in the work, really. How are we going to work together as a group and what’s my part in that and how do I take the lead on this bit and then sit back and allow others to take the lead on that bit? And how do we fit together as a whole? [811-818]

The notion of orchestration reflected aspects of the approach of all three tutors. Mary talked of the importance of orchestrating the use of students’ personal experience as the basis for meaningful learning. She referred also to the importance of applying judgment:

...particularly I think in something like diversity, you can’t push people. Cos I’ve done a lot of training on racism for instance throughout the country and if you push people into a corner people just come out fighting and you don’t change anything. It’s like finding some way where they don’t have to feel guilty but they have to re-examine. [269-273]

All three saw their role as assuming responsibility for the structuring, delivery and overall management of the curriculum. This could involve providing didactic input, seminars and tutorials as well as devising activities designed to stimulate experiential learning. For all three tutors, however, the emphasis throughout was on stimulating personal insight and a process of autonomous personalised learning. All three tutors were very clear that the most important learning took place in an experiential or interactive context and that traditional teaching activity was of lesser or even marginal significance.
5.8.3 Super-ordinate theme: Gatekeeping

Table 33 Gatekeeping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lynne Mary</td>
<td>Recruiting</td>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (517-9,542-561,1062-71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assessing and monitoring</td>
<td>Lynne Mary</td>
<td>Lynne (575, 579-588, 606-8, 623-6, 651-7, 889-92, 1659-65)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Mary (378-83)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The gatekeeping aspect of the role was referred to most directly by Lynne, who accepted it as part and parcel of the job. She viewed her responsibilities as stretching to recruiting fairly and appropriately and withstanding pressures to recruit in terms of quantity rather than quality. She saw assessment and monitoring as not without difficulty but as vital developmental activities. She placed an emphasis on the formative function of feedback. She also saw it as important that she was prepared to fail people. Here are pertinent quotes:

*I do fail people – that’s also part of my job is to fail people, that’s what, you know, as a gatekeeper for the profession.* [890-892]

**Liz:** Yeah, are you an assessor?

**Lynne:** Yeah. Absolutely. I am. [573-575]

Alongside this expressed clarity, however, sat lived difficulty. She did not experience these processes as painless, either for herself or the students. A particular difficulty for her was the close relational context within which they took place. Moreover, she took seriously her duty of care to the welfare of the individual student and to the student group, as well as her commitment to their development. She talked, for instance, of the care she took to ensure she gave fair, comprehensive and constructive feedback to students, as well as the care she took in ensuring the welfare of vulnerable students.
This aspect of the role was not referred to by Sue and only tangentially by Mary. It was implicitly rather than explicitly referred to in her sense of the autonomy she derives from being in the private sector:

\[
I \text{ think it gives us a freedom. That we are not beholden to an institution that says you can’t do that, and you can’t do this. So whatever we do here is our responsibility. It doesn’t belong anywhere else. I must admit, I enjoy that. I’ll give you an example in terms of .....If there’s a student that we particularly think isn’t gonna make it, then we have no compunction about “Sorry, you’re gonna have to leave”}. [378-383]
\]

5.8.4 Super-ordinate theme: Interacting with the wider context

Table 34 Interacting with the wider context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| All          | Dealing with its deficiencies | Lynne Sue | Lynne (489-98)
|              |                     |              | Sue (455-7)          |
|              | Working with limits to autonomy | All | Lynne (496-8)
|              |                     |              | Sue (439-47)         |
|              |                     |              | Mary (401-3)         |
|              | Coping with the pressures | Sue | Sue (447-54, 459-68, 505-12) |
|              | Responding to change | All | Sue (548-53, 550-60, 628-30, 702-3, 803-40) |

This section has a very different set of meanings attached for the three trainers, which seemed strongly linked to their setting.

Sue and Lynne viewed their university setting as deficient in terms of providing an appropriate environment for training and trainers. Factors cited included: the level of bureaucracy; the inadequacy of facilities; procedures not geared to part-time mature students; non-acknowledgement of heavy teaching loads; pressure to research; lack of understanding of programme needs; lack of support. This quote
from Lynne sums up this sense of deficiency, the limits to her power to address such issues, as well as the extra pressure it places on the need to hold students.

I think training in a university setting is anti-therapeutic in a way. There’s so much that happens around the training that often part of your job is not just about trying to create an environment in which people can grow and learn but it’s, it’s about also trying to make up for the deficiencies of being part of a big bureaucracy and the aspects of the experience that make you very anxious are contained. [489-496]

Sue’s account reflected a sense of exasperation emanating from the perceived unfairness of demands placed on her relative to others:

…so we’d be learning about teaching with various people from other disciplines and, you know, someone there from say physics and they’d do lectures to, you know, a couple of hundred people but they would also be complaining “I’ve got to do two lectures this term, I’m just so busy, I don’t know where I’m going find the time for my research”. And I’ll be sitting there thinking “Huh! I work 2½ days a week and I’m supposed to do research and I do 2 full days teaching full contact time.” How does this work? [448-457]

Mary’s account was free of a sense of pressure. She clearly valued the sense of autonomy that being in the private sector brought her. She did, however, acknowledge that she carried some accountability to outside bodies:

It is that freedom for what you want this to be. I don’t have to conform. I conform, obviously, to [the examining body] and we abide by the B.A.C.P. guidelines, all that, but there’s nobody telling me who I can have on my course and who I can’t. [401-403]

All three tutors saw the proposed regulatory process as impacting on their role. The sense of needing to respond to proposed threat was evident in all accounts, although Lynne balanced that with optimism that the sector would be rejuvenated.
Both Sue and Lynne were adopting a pro-active stance. Their strategies included keeping students and themselves informed and up-to-date, reviewing course content and structure and making relevant changes, and simply waiting-and-seeing where the process was leading. Mary’s account demonstrated a greater sense of a waiting game.

5.8.5 Super-ordinate theme: Championing an ethos

### Table 35 Championing an ethos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Mary (317-21, 658-9, 668-9, 741-50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (931-46, 869, 905-7, 810-26)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This was an important thread of meaning that I struggled to label. Lynne described herself as ‘a sort of crusader’ [869] for the importance of relationship. She also wanted to ensure a fair representation of the psychodynamic approach, which she experienced as being misunderstood and misrepresented.

> I’ve certainly applied for jobs where they’ll say “We’re a person-centred team and we’re looking for someone that can… and we don’t want psychodynamic people applying”, sort of thing and you think “Well, hang on” there is a sort of prejudice about. [931-934]

She directly used the term ‘champion’ in terms of what she wished to communicate to her students: So, yeah, so in terms of the theory I think it’s championing a view of being psychodynamic which is more contemporary, which isn’t Freudian and which actually is all there in the theory [790-792].

Mary wished to pass on an ethos related to both her approach to counselling and to counsellor training. She talked of it in moral terms:
So I think that it becomes almost a moral belief in the uniqueness of people and that the students must treat every single person they see as a client as unique and not like somebody else. [747-750]

Although she talked of the ethos, it carried very strong overtones of personal ownership and passing it on successfully carried huge significance for her. It is evident here as she talks of her potential replacement: Because she’s the one person I can rely on to carry the ethos on. And that to me is more important than anything [649-650].
5.9 PSYCHODYNAMIC TRAINERS’ EXPERIENCE OF THE ROLE

5.9.1 Super-ordinate theme: As personally challenging

Table 36 As personally challenging

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Feeling pressured</td>
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<td>Feeling vulnerable</td>
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<td>Sue (279-81, 288-91)</td>
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<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (1709-24)</td>
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<td>Feeling burdened</td>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (512-7, 1553-61, 1601-5)</td>
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<td>Sue</td>
<td>Sue (395-412, 417-23, 430-1)</td>
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<td>Feeling worn down</td>
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<td>Sue</td>
<td>Lynne (1540-51)</td>
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<td>Feeling stretched</td>
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<td>Lynne (989-96)</td>
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<td>Mary</td>
<td>Mary (212-4, 224, 253-60, 483-5, 603-6)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Sue (241-3, 697-8)</td>
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<td>Feeling unsupported</td>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (714-8, 853-9,1579-83)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Sue (206-11, 417-23)</td>
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The personal challenges of the role were acknowledged by all three trainers, but there was a distinct difference in how this challenge was experienced. For Mary, the challenges of the role were part of its rewards. While she could feel stretched by the need to concentrate, to respond to situations in the moment, to problem-solve, this sense of feeling stretched was part of why she found the job so satisfying.

No - because, in fact I quite love it when (laughter)...this sounds perverse, but if, for instance, a trainer is having a problem with somebody in a group or something, I love the almost intellectual challenge about - How am I going to sort this out? What strategies can I use? So, I love that part. [603-606]

Sue and Lynne both talked of feeling stretched by the role and of how they too could experience this as rewarding. …there have been plenty of times when it’s...
been challenging but not too much and so there’s that sort of excitement of, you know [Sue, 697-698]. However, their accounts both contained a strong sense of how, at times, their job felt ‘too much’. This was particularly evident in Sue’s account. Her repeated use of the word ‘pressure’ pointed to how she felt pressurised by the demands of the role. Both Sue and Lynne talked of feeling worn down by their on-going nature. Sue’s imagery was evocative of a sense of lived-with pain:

Well that’s difficult but that doesn’t give me, doesn’t sort of give me, as much stress or bother as just the sort of the day to day almost meaningless bits and pieces that come that just feel to me, over a period of time, like someone’s got a piece of sandpaper that they are constantly rubbing on my skin. And it’s not injurious, you know, it’s not damaging, it’s not going to kill me, but it rubs and it rubs and it’s like there’s no time for it to heal. [323-329]

Feeling vulnerable was seen as an accompaniment to the use of self in the role. Both Lynne and Sue linked this with the unpredictability of student responses. Lynne talked of her sense of vulnerability to misrepresentation and complaint, using the example of how her thought-through willingness to swear could be twisted and used in a way to say this lecturer was actually being abusive or encouraging us to be abusive to clients [1721-1723].

Both Lynne and Sue experienced the level of responsibility they held as at times burdensome. Sue talked of being kept awake at nights sometimes by the sense of responsibility. Lynne talked of how the duty of care she owed to individual students and student groups left her feeling overwhelmed by the sense of responsibility at difficult junctures. Both Lynne and Sue’s accounts highlighted how important feeling supported was, most immediately in terms of colleagues, but also in terms of the wider university. Feeling unsupported added to all the senses of feeling stretched, pressured, worn down, burdened and vulnerable.
On a final note in this section, the importance of support was absent from Mary’s account and responsibility was not seen as burdensome but as positively associated with autonomy: *So the only person I’m answerable to is me* [413].

5.9.2 Super-ordinate theme: As costly

Table 37 As costly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
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<td>Sue (241-3) Lynne (678-9)</td>
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<td>Sue</td>
<td><em>Feeling ill</em></td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Sue (656-9, 663-9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td><em>Losing motivation and sense of competence</em></td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Sue (663-9)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sue</td>
<td><em>As painful</em></td>
<td>Sue Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (1463-9, 1473-8, 1553-61, 1620-24, 1687-94) Sue (204-7, 279-81, 323-9, 337-9, 419-21, 524-9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The experience of training could move from a sense of being challenged to a sense of being depleted, almost one of feeling ‘used-up’. Exhaustion was a term attached to the experience by Lynne. Both Lynne and Sue associated depletion with the need to bring self into the work: *I think for me there’s ……..the thing that’s most exhausting about the job is using yourself in the work* [Lynne 678-679].

Sue had experienced illness as a consequence of the role, alongside a drop in her sense of her competence in her work. She had also experienced a loss of motivation and sense of her own competence:

*But certainly my health was not good until I had a summer vacation and, you know, had a good chance to rest, really. I guess it undermines my confidence in my practice, in my ability to make reasonably good decisions but also my sense of …you know, when I haven’t got time to*
really look at and evaluate what I’m doing then I can’t actually get any enjoyment or sense of what’s good in it either. [663-669]

Feeling pain was part of the training experience for both Lynne and Sue. Some of this pain was associated with feeling heavily criticised by trainees.

…and that, you know, that sometimes what gets painful about the job is when you’ve….it’s not just about being loved but when you actually try your hardest with someone and actually it’s never right. Students can be very critical, and certainly I think the higher the level of anxiety the more perfect they want you to be. And tolerance for imperfection…..tolerance for imperfections can be in short supply sometimes. [Lynne 1463-1469]

Sue also talked of the impact of these little grating things all the time that over a period of time I think have a cumulative effect and leave me feeling bloodied and really beaten down, really [337-339].

At times, both tutors experienced a sense of attack or assault. This could be by individual students or student groups. Collegial support was perceived as vital in such situations. There was also pain that arose from being involved in processes that were inherently painful. Sue recognised that the process of personal change for trainees could be painful and therefore at times difficult to be alongside. Lynne talked of the pain of failing students with whom you had built a personal relationship:

I think the other worst bit of the job is having to fail people. And the, err, the emotional upset that causes me and, it’s obviously causing it for them, but I think the idea you can just…..I think bracing yourself, really, for that meeting where you’re going in pretty well knowing it’s going to be ….. ”Well, it looks like it’s going to be hard for you to continue on the course” …..I mean, you can pass the buck by saying the exam board have decided but really it’s me saying that you’ve failed and when, I suppose, that end of a dream for people is painful. [1553-1561]
5.9.3 Super-ordinate theme: As rewarding

Table 38 As rewarding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
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<td>Mary</td>
<td>Lynne (1331-6, 1347-54, 1380-1, 1400-5, 1419-24)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Lynne (1370-81, 1449-51)</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (989-1018, 1285-92, 1296, 1750)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meeting personal needs</td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Lynne (1370-81, 1449-51)</td>
</tr>
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<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (1370-81, 1449-51)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Lynne (1370-81, 1449-51)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal development</td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Lynne (989-96, 1322-27)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (989-96, 1322-27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enjoyment and satisfaction</td>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (989-96, 1322-27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Lynne (989-96, 1322-27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Lynne (989-96, 1322-27)</td>
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</table>

All three tutors took significant rewards from their role. They used powerful phrases to describe the meaning they imbued it with. Lynne talked of counselling as a ‘quiet revolution’ [1336] and of counselling training as part of a potentially world-changing movement.

It’s not just, it’s not just this course or those people, they go out there and actually help people. In helping people become more resourceful, they have an impact on their families, their partnerships, their work, their community, their society. [1351-1354]

Sue talked in terms of being part of a creative, almost mystical process. She called on a gardening metaphor:
It’s a bit like... when I’m digging up my potatoes, this fabulous harvest, I kind of go- Look what I did! - knowing full well I didn’t actually do much. I put the potato in the ground and I might have earthed up a bit but actually I suppose something about recognising I have been part of a process that is almost a bit mystical, actually, and that I did do something and it’s a bit of a privilege to be part of that process. [722-728]

Rather than the inherent meaningfulness of the counselling or training process, Mary talked of the personal meaningfulness that being a trainer provided. She conveyed its centrality within her life:

… it’s just an essential part of my life, as teaching was. In a way, I suppose, what I’ve done, I’ve replaced what I used to get from teaching. I’ve replaced it now and, in some ways the rewards are even greater. [560-563]

All three acknowledged the role’s importance in meeting their personal needs, albeit to differing degrees. Both Sue and Mary saw the role as fulfilling their need to feel valued. All three recognised that it fed their desire for challenge or change. Both Lynne and Sue experienced it as enabling them to express their creativity. Sue talked in terms of it helping meet her narcissistic needs. Lynne talked of the reward of being in authentic relationships with students. She recognised how it
fitted with her desire to feel loved: ...as much as this noble activity, I’m sure I do it because I want people to love me - you know [1449-1451].

Lynne and Sue recognised that the role had helped them develop personally. Lynne talked in terms of being stretched to learn and understand more. Sue talked of how it had developed her ability to relate to others, as well as her ability to place value upon herself. Perhaps reflecting her different point on the lifespan, Mary talked in terms of it ‘keeping her going’ rather than feeding her growth and development. This linked with the clear sense of enjoyment and satisfaction that the role brought her. This was true of Sue and Lynne also.

*I love people, I love to see people change. I love people, I love the fact that I learn so much by what they learn. I love the fact that, erm, I never get bored.* [Lynne, 1285-1287]

### 5.9.4 Super-ordinate theme: As one of shifting extremes

#### Table 39 As one of shifting extremes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Sue (203-8, 277-83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Lynne (970-9, 989-96, 1520-1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While Mary’s experience was one of on-going reward, Sue and Lynne conveyed a sense of a rollercoaster of experiencing, one of extreme downs and highs. They also portrayed the extremes as sometimes in coexistence. The following three quotes capture this experiencing of the training phenomenon.

*I was thinking that first thing that comes to mind it depends on when you ask me. So if you’d asked me last academic year I would say well it’s just Hell, it’s just survival, it’s just, you know, coping with steaming piles of shit being thrown at me by angry, anxious students and having to deal with that on my own. I suppose that’s very much about some specific circumstances that were around last year.* [Sue, 203-208]
I think it’s the absolute best job in the world and the worst job in the world, and sometimes at the same time. [Lynne, 1520-1521].

Yeah. I also think on both bits whether it’s when it’s terribly stressful and awful or when it’s going better I think part of what makes that is in the end the same thing. It’s something about taking the risk to really bring myself and sometimes when it gets too much that’s absolutely what I really don’t want to do. I just want to hide and lie low and lick my wounds. But it’s also what I think makes it much more satisfying as well; those moments when someone goes - aha, get it. [Sue, 277-283]

5.9.5 Super-ordinate theme: As in transition

Table 40 As in transition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key cross-references</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Uncertainty</td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Lynne (1057-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Mary (420-4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sue</td>
<td>Sue (558-67)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Threat</td>
<td>Lynne</td>
<td>Lynne (1059-1061, 1063-73, 1075-87)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Mary (428-31, 456-8, 630-43)</td>
</tr>
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A sense of being part of a transitory period led to some sense of uncertainty and perceived threat. Regulation dominated in this area. While Lynne carried a level of positivity and optimism around the process, and saw professionalism as a positive move, she shared Sue and Mary’s sense of anxiety about not being able to predict the outcome. All three tutors alluded to the uncertainty of the situation.

So I guess we’re sort of mindful of it from the point of view of well we need to think about what we’re offering and I suppose I do worry about ... I don’t know, I suppose offering training at all to people in this uncertain climate. [Sue, 558-561]
Lynne’s uncertainty extended into a sense of threat. She felt that counselling had undergone a bit of a battering [1060] and had feared at one point, even thinking perhaps we’ll lose counselling altogether [1063-1064]. While she had moved beyond this, she retained her sense that important and personally valued aspects of counselling were vulnerable to attack. This was also true for Mary. Both feared the rise of the medical model. There was a sense in Mary’s account that the direction taken would mould her decision as to when she would leave the role.
## 5.10 COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL TRAINERS: OVERALL THEMES

### Table 41 How CBT trainers understand their role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate theme</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delivering a professional education</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Teaching&lt;br&gt;Embedding a critical, evidence-based approach&lt;br&gt;Developing, monitoring and assessing skills&lt;br&gt;Inculcating professional attitudes&lt;br&gt;Facilitating autonomous practice&lt;br&gt;Preparing people for employment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing the provision</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Coping with constraint and limitation&lt;br&gt;Responding to shifting contexts&lt;br&gt;Managing pressures and demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relating with students as learners</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Being engaged and responsive&lt;br&gt;Building a developmental relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributing to the field</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 42 How CBT trainers experience their role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Superordinate theme</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>As stressful</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>As frustrating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As anxiety-provoking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As pressurised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As undermining</strong></td>
<td>Two of the four</td>
<td>Tiredness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Powerlessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Work-life balance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As a developmental process</strong></td>
<td>Three of the four</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>As rewarding</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>As enjoyable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As meaningful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As personally developmental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>As satisfying personal needs and wants</td>
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</table>
5.11 CBT TRAINERS’ UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE

5.11.1 Super-ordinate theme: As delivering a professional education

Table 43 As delivering a professional education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td><strong>Developing, monitoring and assessing practitioner skills</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Sophie (170-82, 198-202, 253-60) Jenny (176-83, 184-7, 197-210, 349-54, 377-80) Dave (125-30, 196-9, 340-3) Jack (98-100, 111, 293-99)</td>
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<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td><strong>Facilitating autonomous practice</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Dave (233-9, 243-5, 257-61, 308-14, 325-338) Sophie (356-68, 376-80, 411-16) Jenny (197-210, 592-7) Jack (884-8)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Preparing people for employment</strong></td>
<td>Jack Sophie</td>
<td>Jack (113-121, 284-7, 292-303) Sophie (189-91, 228-33, 282-5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Delivering a professional education was a key theme in the accounts with a strong element of unity concerning the constituent elements of the educational process. The notion of professionalism as something of worth and value to be aspired to was present throughout all the accounts. The notion of education rather than training was also a leitmotif. Both Jack and Sophie explicitly expressed differing
levels of unease with the term training. Jack highlighted my use of the term in the interview:

*It’s interesting you referring to it constantly as training because a big part of me sees it that way but another part of me sees it differently. Another part of me sees it as an academic endeavour.* [561-564]

Sophie equated training pejoratively with I.A.P.T. programmes: … *training without education, if you like* [665].

The provision of a professional education had six inter-connecting sub-themes. All identified themselves as teachers, although they placed different emphasis on the methods they would implement and/or felt comfortable with. Jenny saw a traditional didactic approach as common in CBT and an inevitable consequence of the large knowledge base. Sophie saw the place for and the virtue of a didactic approach, albeit one that was accompanied by debate and discussion. All talked of the significance of more formal teaching methods but also of the importance of varying the methods used in order to stimulate, engage and motivate students. These processes were seen as important to the development of students as critical thinkers, seen as foundational to a critical, evidence-based approach to practice. All emphasised the importance of fitting the model to the person, not the person to the model, and of adopting a critical stance towards the evidence.

Both Jack and Jenny saw self-awareness as contributing to critical practice. Jenny, identifying herself with the more progressive elements of CBT, focused particularly on its significance within practitioner development:

*I’m trying to get them to actually look at why, what are they asking, why are they asking? What’s the….is it about them or is it coming from the clients? ….. Why am I reacting in this way? Because if I’m reacting in this way I’m actually treating you based on my process and not what’s actually going on for you. I’m interpreting what you’re saying rather than understanding what you are saying.* [203-210]
Tutors also saw what might be classified more easily as training activity as part of their role in terms of developing skills. An emphasis on monitoring and assessment was most strongly present in Sophie’s account and, to a lesser extent, in Jenny’s account. For both, this was connected with a concern to produce ethically-aware, competent practitioners. All tutors saw their role as encompassing not only the development of skills, knowledge, and critical awareness but of inculcating professional attitudes. These professional attitudes focused on notions of service, integrity, commitment, boundariedness, accountability, responsibility and respect. The importance of respect (and humility) was strongly present for Sophie:

So it’s kind of embedded in that, in a sense, that respect for the subject area is respect for yourself as a trainee, respect for clients, respect for the knowledge base which means having a critical stance towards it but also looking at what’s good about it. Respect for your clients; that they’re not really different from you at all except that they were unlucky and you weren’t, usually. [347-353]

The role of tutors as models in this was emphasised in particular by Dave, although it was evident in all the accounts to some extent. Dave spoke of employing tutors on the basis of their professional attitude:

That’s probably where I work hard at trying, trying to, err, act as a role model, I think. And also, but also using...selecting people to input on the training who I think will act as good models for reference. [130-136]

The facilitation of learning was seen as important to the development of students as autonomous practitioners. The focus was on the encouragement of critical inquiry, with tutors and students engaged in a collaborative inquiry process. Jenny identified this as a process she would like more of as part of the programme. Dave saw this as an approach that he increasingly was drawn towards and one that he saw as growing in appropriateness the further along the training (or educative) process students had come.
Separately from any professional gatekeeping function, both Jack and Sophie emphasised the significance of preparation for employment in the field. For Jack, it was about keeping an awareness throughout the training of the situations within which people were likely to work. It was also, importantly, about producing employable practitioners. He put this succinctly:

*I want to produce, I want to help produce good, honest, ethical, skilled clinicians with a piece of paper that says they’ve got a Masters in it, which might get them a decent job. As simple as that, really, I suppose.* [285-287]

For Sophie, it was about producing practitioners who would contribute to the field, who would offer the optimum service she thought clients were entitled to.

**5.11.2 Super-ordinate theme: Managing the provision**

Table 44 Managing the provision

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<td><strong>Coping with constraint and lack</strong></td>
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<td>Dave (513-31, 562-6, 585-7) Jenny (334-6, 347-55, 752-3, 762-772) Sophie (216-21, 503-1, 532-6, 593-9) Jack (420-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td><strong>Responding to change</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Dave (422-9, 865-7) Jenny (396-99, 404-14, 931-43, 952-8) Sophie (235-45, 641-51, 653-70, 688-92, 702-10, 847-8, 872-6) Jack (128-31, 993-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td><strong>Managing pressures and demands</strong></td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Dave (389-92, 411-6, 433-9, 458-60, 469-73, 481-8, 494-6, 1203-9) Jenny (765-73, 779-87) Sophie (513-4, 538-43) Jack (410-18, 439-49, 451-64, 481-3, 497-503)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All highlighted the managerial aspects of the role. The managerial responsibilities were seen as onerous by all four tutors, although Jack emphasised their manageability in comparison to responsibilities he had carried in a prior role within the health service:
…there’s an awful lot I’m doing but there’s no comparison with working in the Health Service. People don’t die in this job. Somebody might fail an assignment or I might get a bollocking from a boss for, I don’t know, being late with a proposal for a paper or something but people aren’t jumping off bridges or killing their wives and things. [482-486]

One facet of managing was simply trying to work within the constraints and inadequacies of the institutional environment. Sophie and Jenny emphasised the impact of lack of resources – of books, of staff, of appropriate rooming and so forth. Jack’s major emphasis was the lack of time allotted for the range of tasks he was expected to undertake. Also to be worked with was a lack of understanding on the part of the setting of the programme requirements. While this was strongly present for both Jenny and Sophie, this stood out for me in Dave’s account. Dave talked of himself as having two masters – the university who validated the programmes and the N.H.S. who employed him and provided the institutional setting for the programme’s delivery. Neither provided adequate levels of support for the role or understanding of its demands:

That’s the thing that the N.H.S. doesn’t get. They seem to think that a workshop is a workshop and that’s five hours in a seven and a half hour day and the other time you could be doing other things. Yeah, you just turn up and deliver. The pressure was then the time for that. So, from the university point of view, of course, they don’t seem to get that there’s a pressure of time on the role that we … we’re quite tight here. [513-519]

Constraint and lack linked with another sub-theme – that of managing the demands and pressures of the role. All talked of the difficulties of managing the administrative workload. Sophie talked of her frustration at the amount of time she spent on asinine administration. As well as dealing with heavily bureaucratised and, at times, impenetrable systems, there sat demands such as developing the provision, liaising with professional bodies, staying current with the research and literature, effectively preparing for teaching, recruiting and generating income. While an element of simply coping as best as one could was there in all the accounts, both Dave and Jack talked of strategies they employed.
Jack talked of working from home part of the week. Dave talked of employing a filtering system: *I do to a minimum or when I’m prompted to twice. If it’s that important then they’ll tell me a couple of times it’s important* [433-434]. He still talked of putting in fifty hours work in a typical week.

A third sub-theme was responding to shifting contexts. One such context was the shifting policies of universities themselves, the justification for which could be hard to understand. All four tutors expressed a sense of frustration at what they regarded as unnecessary, imposed change:

> *Errmm, there seems to be a little churn of stuff, of generating activity that I’m not, I can’t see the quality improvements in it. It seems to be just doing something for its own sake.* [Dave, 422-424]

Sophie explicitly linked what was happening in universities with what was happening in the wider political context. She saw, for instance, demands to bring in e-learning as reflecting politically-motivated cost-cutting. All four tutors saw threat as well as promise in the shifting national context. The adverse economic climate was seen as threatening recruitment. While all four tutors saw the anticipated regulation as bringing in much-needed minimum standards into training, they voiced some reservations about the potentially standardising and restrictive impacts of the proposed system. The largest perceived threat was I.A.P.T. which they saw not only as threatening their programmes’ survival but as an attack on the integrity of CBT. Jack opined that it is not based on solid evidence and expressed his belief that it will produce poor results which will threaten the future of CBT generally.

> *There is direct competition, yes, because they can come on our course and pay for it or they can get a job and get the course paid for. And although it’s IAPT it’s a paid course. And there’s a whole load of politics behind that. Because that’s very much what the whole IAPT thing is about. Your clients fit your model. This is what CBT does with depression. You have X amount of sessions and that’s it, “Goodbye”. And there is no person interacting with that so I struggle with that concept because it’s the, it’s*
the whole total opposite of my beliefs and it’s the opposite of where I perceive CBT is going. [404-414]

Tutor responses varied between staying personally informed concerning pertinent changes, relying on B.A.B.C.P. to reflect their interests, ensuring they kept their courses up-to-date and competitive, and ‘waiting-and-seeing’ what happens.

5.11.3 Super-ordinate theme: Relating with students as learners

Table 45 Relating with students as learners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributor themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being engaged and responsive</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Dave (164-71, 681-6, 691-7) Jenny (150-7, 445-60, 463-75, 504-9) Jack (153-55, 238-54, 389-92, 711-14, 811-21) Sophie (204-8, 389-96)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While this theme could have been included as a sub-theme of ‘delivering a professional education’, it seemed to me sufficiently distinct to merit separation. Here the tutors focused on how they viewed their role in terms of their interpersonal relationships with students. The distinction is a fine one, as they all saw the relationship through the lens of aiding professional development. However, treating this separately is useful in highlighting the nuanced and at times divergent ways that tutors construed this aspect of their role.

All four tutors sought to engage students and be responsive to their needs. This engagement was described in a range of ways, as involving authenticity (Sophie), passion and integrity (Jack), the ability and desire to inspire and enthuse (Dave). Responsiveness to group and individual needs was also viewed as important. Jack thought receiving and responding to student feedback was crucial to his
understanding of the role. Both Jenny and Dave talked of identifying and responding to differing individual learning needs.

I do like to think that, that there are many points of individual contact within the students’ learning journey. So even though they get the same stuff, I’m mindful of the different needs of the students in the sessions. So even a group isn’t a real group. It might ...preparing, reflecting on the, the, the variety of learning needs and trying to contextualise the teaching with examples for the variety of participants. There’s still a lot of single journeys all occurring at the same time. [Dave, 691-697]

Building developmental relationships with groups and individuals was a related sub-theme. This involved differing constituent parts for tutors. Sophie, Jack and Jenny placed emphasis on the importance of providing support and challenge. Jack added the desire to make the experience fun and empowering: I take it very seriously but I also recognise that it should be fun. [944-5]. All tutors spoke in terms of a shift in the relationship over the life of the course, of encouraging a move from dependence to independence. Jenny used her hands to illustrate her meaning:

She compared it with parenting, wondering whether her gender was significant:

...the whole thing I was talking about holding and kind of pushing comes from partly being a female. I think a female is more likely to think about it - I want to hold these people - and I guess it’s almost perceiving in some kind of parental role, almost, of, you know, hold them then give them that
gentle push to go forward maybe a more female orientated thing. [821-827]

5.11.4 Super-ordinate theme: Contributing to the field

Table 46 Contributing to the field

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Dave (1132-9, 1514-7)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jack (785-801)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Jenny (1296-8)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

All the tutors saw their role as important and as making a contribution to the field. All were committed to producing high quality programmes and graduates whose work would raise standards across the public sector. For Sophie, this reflected a passionately held belief in the importance of service to the community and her fear of falling standards:

I think there should be an infrastructure across counselling, not only CBP, of people who have at least post-graduate diplomas and preferably masters, so they can kind of, and there should be enough of them so that when people undertake lower level training and they’re in agencies there is somebody who actually is qualified and experienced to supervise them and monitor the quality of that work as opposed to just running it by a competency document or a manual. [546-554]

This desire to protect standards was also evident in Jack’s account:

I also know that I’m maintaining the integrity of CBT which is very, very important to me. One of the things that pissed me off totally about working in psychology was the conception that all you had to do was read Mind Over Mood and you could do CBT. [785-788]

Dave saw himself as contributing to the quality of mental health care provision. Jenny saw her role as contributing to the delivery of an important service:
I take training very serious. I want to train these people to be very good practitioners 'cos the job they do is very serious. And actually the job that I do is very serious... [1296-1298]
5.12 CBT TRAINERS’ EXPERIENCE OF THE ROLE

5.12.1 Super-ordinate theme: As stressful

Table 47 As stressful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Feeling frustrated</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Dave (422-7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jenny (359-60,724-7, 762-74)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sophie (519-30, 533-5, 538-43, 691-2, 709-12, 970-77, 1069-81)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jack (439-49, 451-64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>Feeling anxious</td>
<td>Dave</td>
<td>Dave (494-6, 1316-20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jenny (1219-26, 1249-60, 1275-83)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>Feeling pressurised</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Dave (458-60, 469-73, 511-19, 1204-6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jenny (783-7,1226-31 )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jack (410-18, 420-5, 489-93, 506-18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sophie(210-21, 532-6, 538-40)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All tutors experienced the role as stressful, although the terms they used to describe it and the level of stress experienced varied between tutors. Both Jack and Jenny used the term stress to describe their experience of the role, although Jack’s sense of the stress involved in the job was less than Jenny’s:

Aahh... stress levels. Because, obviously, that’s quite stressful and then, obviously, working in the university; a large organisation with all those systems which don’t work. Obviously your stress levels go up on that. So you are far more stressed in this job than I have been in anything else I’ve done. [Jenny, 1225-1230]

All tutors experienced themselves as pressurised by the variety and intensity of demands placed on them. This was particularly true for Dave whose role carried very heavy commitments and had two demanding ‘masters’, the university and the N.H.S. Issues such as inadequate time and resources, needing to deal with institutional systems and cultures, needing to be responsive to shifting contexts,
recruit in a difficult and shifting market - all these could be seen as imposing unhelpful pressures on the person of the trainer.

All tutors experienced frustration which was predominantly aimed at the contexts within which they worked. It was most strong in Sophie’s account – frustration was the word she kept coming back to with superlatives added: *I find that immensely frustrating [520]; And I find it very frustrating [538]; So that’s all really frustrating [543]*. Anxiety accompanied the role for both Dave and Jenny, in terms of fulfilling the teaching aspect of the role but generally with meeting all the demands of the role:

*There’s me stuck in the dark on a train, err, in knots of anxiety because a. I’m stuck on the train, it’s really dark and I’m away from home....in knots because there’s - I’ve got teaching to do tomorrow that I haven’t prepared for.* [Dave, 1316-1320]

### 5.12.2 Super-ordinate theme: As undermining

**Table 48 As undermining**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feeling unsupported</td>
<td>Dave, Sophie, Jenny</td>
<td>Dave (397-402), Sophie (532-5, 1285-9), Jenny (762-72, 1285-9, 1295-9, 1308-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling unvalued</td>
<td>Dave, Sophie</td>
<td>Dave (397-402, 562-6, 585-7, 1256-9), Sophie (503-5, 1066-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling tired</td>
<td>Sophie</td>
<td>Sophie (317-9, 1066-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling powerless</td>
<td>Sophie, Dave</td>
<td>Sophie (593-61, 631-4, 641-5, 705-10, 725-7,975-7, 1069-81), Dave (1338-41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacting negatively on personal life</td>
<td>Dave</td>
<td>Dave (1245-6, 1256-9, 1262-6, 1316-24, 1338-41)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dave, Jenny and Sophie’s accounts all carried a sense of feeling undermined in differing ways and with differing impacts on their person and life. Jack was the exception. Although acknowledging the pressures and frustrations of the role, there was no sense of him being personally undermined. He talked of having learnt the importance of self-care and employing this within the role.

Dave, Jenny and Sophie all reported feeling unsupported within their institutional context. Sophie connected this with a lack not only of understanding of the needs of their programme but a failure to value vocational programmes generally. Feeling both unvalued and unsupported was a strong theme in Dave’s account. He talked in terms of: “…a thankless task. No-one actually, actually ever says, you know, well done, good job, unless you do it to each other. [585-587]

A sense of powerlessness was felt by both Dave and Sophie but most intensely by Sophie. While Dave felt himself chased by circumstance Sophie saw herself as in a battle that she could not win. This battle was tiring. She conjured up two powerful images, the first one focusing more on the impact of the battle:

One of them would be like a very small rhinoceros outside a very big door. And it’s sat down and keeps trying to do the door in with its horn and it’s got really tired and it’s gone to sleep. That’s as it is! [1066-1069]

The second focused on how she would like the battle to end:
It would almost be some form of anarchy. I would like to see all these levels and tiers of managers and bureaucrats and jobsworths, like the French Revolution, I’d like them put on public trial. I’d like them to be named and shamed and asked questions by the general public. [1069-1072]

Dave highlighted the impact on his life outside work. He talked of the long hours, his preoccupation with work, the personal decisions made in response to the lack of N.H.S. support for his role. He talked, for instance, of past delays in making permanent his training role as causing him to postpone beginning a family.
5.12.3 Super-ordinate theme: As a developmental process

Table 49 As a developmental process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>Jenny (835-46, 1276-82)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>Jack (42-4, 64-72,79-85, 857-9, 1002-7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dave</td>
<td>Dave (226-9, 233-45)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jack, Jenny and Dave all saw themselves as on differing points of a developmental process. Jenny identified herself as a novice with lots yet to learn. She saw the learning as being ‘on the job’ and the way she performed it as perhaps impacted on by her own ageing process.

Yes, as my learning develops and as I mature as a person ...emm...cos I always, even though I am forty-something and even though I do have...erm..this job and these qualifications I do still see myself as a work in progress. There’s still so much to learn. [839-843]

Jack similarly saw himself as a relative novice in terms of professional training and emphasised the importance of self-evaluation and reflection, learning from other trainers, as well as gaining and responding to student feedback. He saw reviewing his teaching practice as essential to carrying out the role with integrity:

I’m going to have bad teaching sessions. My job is to go away and reflect on it. [1006-1007]

Dave talked of his understanding of the role having shifted as he gained more experience in the role. From a starting-point of feeling as if he had to know everything, he had shifted towards a greater emphasis on helping students learn:

So, early on I used to try and know everything. Now I think, as they’re getting lots of post-graduate studies about and as I’ve spent more time in the role and been able to be a bit more reflective it’s...the facilitative role has taken perhaps a ...it’s broadened. I wouldn’t necessarily do it all day, every day but there are increasing opportunities for it and been more
willing to sit with... even if I do know, not filling in the gaps for students.

[233-243]

5.12.4 Super-ordinate theme: As rewarding

Table 50 As rewarding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Subordinate themes</th>
<th>Contributors</th>
<th>Key Cross-References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>As enjoyable</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Jack (783-4, 845-9, 888-91) Jenny (724, 983-7, 1079-86) Sophie (892-904) Dave (966-70, 1027-32, 1037-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>As meaningful</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Sophie (306-323, 930-40, 952-7) Jack (784-6, 791-801, 824-831, 845) Jenny (993-4, 1005-10, 1065-6, 1086-8) Dave (576-81, 844-5, 1120-1, 1131-41, 1159-71)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>As personally developmental</td>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>Jenny (463-71, 1106-8, 1169-76, 1194-206)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenny</td>
<td>As satisfying personal needs and wants</td>
<td>All</td>
<td>Jenny (823-8, 982-3, 989, 1016-28, 1039-41) Jack (835-40, 845-6, 941-4) Sophie (975-7, 1002-14) Dave (548-58, 984-7, 1007-16, 1027-32)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All four tutors talked in terms of the intrinsic rewards that came from undertaking the role. All took enjoyment from some aspects of the role. For Jenny, it was largely about being part of the students’ individual developmental processes. Sophie enjoyed the challenge of engaging students in debate and questioning and that they often went on to produce excellent work. She talked of feeling proud. Dave talked of the pleasure of being involved in learning and inquiry alongside students. Jack’s account contained the strongest sense of enjoyment in being alongside students in their learning.

*I do get pleasure, I do get an enormous buzz out of it. I’m galvanised by it, I’m excited by that. After a full day’s teaching I go home and open a bottle of wine. Not to go “Huh” but to celebrate, almost. It’s good for me.* [888-891]
On a more existential note, all four tutors were rewarded by being engaged in what they saw as a meaningful endeavour. All tutors believed in the efficacy of CBT and hence they were involved in a project that ultimately helped people. Dave saw himself as empowering practitioners with effective ways of working with clients that would lead in turn to their empowerment. Jenny saw herself as contributing to individual development: she spoke of her passion in developing the individual [1087]. Jack talked of his desire to help people build careers and to maintain standards of practice.

*I know that if they succeed they’ll have a good career. I also know that I’m maintaining the integrity of CBT which is very, very important to me.*

[784-786]

Meaning and idealism came together for Sophie. Sophie saw her role as contributing to social justice by maintaining and developing the standards of the service offered to the public. It was about ‘putting something back’ into the community and producing practitioners who would do similarly. She wanted to produce politically aware and ethically active practitioners. She rooted her sense of purpose in her Jewish immigrant background. She talked of how that had instilled in her the importance of education, of public service, of accountability. For Sophie, the personal and political were intertwined.

The sense of tutors meeting personal needs and wants was present, although at times difficult for either myself or the tutors to unravel. *So maybe it’s - there’s something to - doesn’t feel that way but it may be something about, err, making sure - it doesn’t feel like that way, so I don’t know* [Dave, 1014-6]. Jack, Dave and Jenny talked in terms of the role being personally reparative. Dave and Jenny talked of their failure to thrive in their own schooling, perhaps impelling a desire to play a part in the educational thriving of others. Jack saw the role as reparative of the burnout he experienced within the N.H.S. The role was also seen as complementary to personal motivations, hence its enjoyability. Sophie talked of her low boredom threshold. Dave spoke of his love of learning as well as his non-linear learning style, his desire to be involved in something productive, his rejection of unearned authority, all of which were satisfied within the role. Jenny
talked of meeting her parental needs. Jack talked of having his ego stroked. On a more prosaic note, it fulfilled the need for a job for Sophie and a means of escape from the N.H.S. for Jack.

The fourth sub-theme was that of personal development for tutors, identifiable most strongly in Jenny’s account but present also in Jack’s. Jenny saw development as arising from both the challenges and opportunities provided within the role. Identifying herself as *slightly social phobic* [1143], she saw the role as challenging her to interact with others and to perform before others. At the same time she was provided with safe parameters as well as feedback to help in the developmental process. She talked of being able to play with the differing aspects of herself:

> …you can’t just stand there and be really dry, because everybody will switch off so you have to interact. You know, you have to say some things which are quite amusing and you do get, you know, a laugh, or not, so, you know, you change your material. So you do have err, err, err the extrovert. You can play with that polarity of your personality, if you like, in a safe-ish way. [1200-1206]

For Jack, the personal development experienced was almost a reconnection with his life-force. One cross-reference caught this, although it flavoured large sections of his interview: *This has given me a complete new lease of life. I’m empowered by it* [843-844].
5.13 MOVING ON

In this chapter I have stayed as far as I am able with the descriptive, while acknowledging the co-construction of the narrative I have presented. I have tried to stay faithful to the hermeneutics of empathy in this chapter, to capture as far as I am able the nuances of understanding and experiencing as expressed by the participants. I have attempted to start the picture afresh for each person and each study, while aware that I inevitably brought forth understandings from prior analyses. The analyses have gone through cycles of construction and reconstruction. I now stop and move to a more conceptual project and to the hermeneutics of questioning where I seek to contextualise and interrogate the findings, to see whether any tentative links can be made and any tentative conclusions drawn.
CHAPTER 6 DISCUSSION

6.1 A CHAPTER OVERVIEW

In this chapter I move to a more overtly interpretative position in relation to the findings. Smith et al (2009) talk of the register changing as a dialogue is developed between the findings and the literature. Here I move away from the hermeneutics of empathy which guided the initial presentation of the findings towards the hermeneutics of questioning.

I use two metaphors here in order to try and capture my approach. One is the hall of mirrors, used by Schön (1987) to describe the psychoanalytic practicum. He likened it to clinical supervision, talking of it as a reflective process within which students are encouraged to look inwards, to examine their own mental processes, unconscious tendencies or ‘edge of awareness’ processes. However, I also find understanding in the connection between the psychological, social, economic, cultural, political, territorial and temporal. I would add Pilgrim’s (private conversation) metaphor of the riverboat. Pilgrim (1991, 1997) has argued that the inward focus of therapy leads to a restricted, decontextualized understanding. The author likens it to the boat trying to navigate its way by shining its lights downwards rather than outwards to the river and its banks. The same critique is levied at education (Usher et al, 1997). I employ both an outward and inward focus in the analytic processes here. As with supervision, not all areas of the work can be explored. As with supervision, any understandings constructed can only be regarded as tentative hypotheses. Key is their utility, whether they serve to enlighten, whether they carry a sense of verisimilitude, however tightly contextualised.

In the process of placing the findings within the literature, I start to chart the relationships between the four studies. Are there commonalities? Are there substantial differences? Are there more variations within studies than between them? I attempt to follow through an evolving argument utilising the areas of exploration visited in the literature review. My discussion thus focuses at differing junctures on how the findings can be contextualised within the following areas:
• The literature on trainer experience and understanding that has emerged from within the British counsellor training field
• Wider understandings of occupational motivation, reward, satisfaction, stress and burnout.
• The importance of the wider institutional context and the shifting educational discourse
• The professionalisation project

I approach the findings at a number of levels as I move from the more descriptive towards the more interpretative end of the spectrum, from more manifest to more latent meanings. In section 6.2 I begin the endeavour of finding convergence and divergence in the studies overall while placing them within the literature. In section 6.3, I attempt to summarise and bring together the threads that have been drawn into some coherent order. In section 6.4, I more firmly adopt an authorial voice as an insider researcher and incorporate into the discussion issues that have been raised not only in the analysis of the findings but also within the research process itself. In 6.5 I pull the discussion together with a summary of the ‘super-super-ordinate’ themes across the four studies.

I discuss the methodological boundaries of the project and its findings in the final chapter. Integral to this discussion is an examination of the relationship between the researcher and the researched. I include in this an examination of how I as the researcher became simultaneously the researched as part of this process.
6.2 CONVERGENCE AND DIVERGENCE AND CONTEXTUALISATION WITHIN THE LITERATURE

6.2.1 The fit with the 1990s training literature

Plus ça change, plus c’est la même chose?
Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr, 1849

As I indicated in my literature review, the 1990s were productive years in terms of texts on training produced by British trainers. I argued that these texts illustrate training at a particular point in its history, providing a useful horizon against which to set these findings. McLeod (1995) had argued that the stage of development of counselling in Britain had important implications for those running training courses. Trainers at that point were highly unlikely to have undergone any form of training for the role. Most courses were less than ten years old with staff often struggling to gain academic acceptance within a ‘sceptical college environment’ (p.153). While he saw this as bringing particular pressures to bear, McLeod predicted that further professionalisation would bring additional ones. His exhortation for further research set a backdrop for this study.

My immediate impression was of greater similarity than difference between the accounts of the trainers presented here and those of the 1990s. The earlier accounts had focused on the demanding nature of the role linked to its relational and multi-tasking nature, alongside the particular demands stemming from its institutional context and its professional gatekeeping aspects. These had contributed to a sense of the role as placing intense demands on the person of the trainer leading to a large incidence of trainers reporting themselves as under stress (McLeod, 1995). Such a picture was also evident in these accounts in their entirety.

Relational demands and their impact figured in differing measure in all the studies. Person-centred trainers saw being in relationship as fundamental to their role. They viewed their person as the key resource; it was about a ‘way of being’ (Rogers, 1980). They engaged deeply in group processes and lived out a
profoundly-held commitment to equality and power-sharing. Being in relationship was also a key theme for psychodynamic trainers, again involving the use of self as a key resource. They saw themselves as models for what a counsellor ‘is’ and ‘does’, guiding their attitudes and behaviours as they held and contained student groups. For the integrative trainers, holding and containment, using self as a key resource, creating and maintaining relationships were all integral to the construction and conduct of the learning environment. CBT trainers placed less emphasis on relational demands but saw being engaged and responsive and building a developmental relationship with students as important to the learning process.

The multitasking nature of the role is evident in the overall shape and complexity of the findings and, I would argue, mirrored in my difficulty in containing them within a manageable framework. In what could be described as a parallel process, try as I might to limit the sub-themes, they were stubbornly present and demanding inclusion. Note, for instance, the six sub-themes in ‘delivering a professional education’ that formed only one of the four superordinate themes in CBT trainers’ accounts of their understanding of the role. Moreover managing the differing demands of the role was a challenge threaded across the different studies. Managing a complexity of demands was implicit within the person-centred trainers’ accounts, even though only made explicit by two of the trainers. The task of managing for both the integrative and CBT trainers involved not only responding to the scale of demands but also to their conflicting nature.

The gatekeeping aspect of the role was highlighted again across all four studies as part of holding and developing standards of practice (person-centred and integrative trainers), and the ‘developing, monitoring and assessing skills’ aspect of delivering a professional education (CBT trainers). One psychodynamic trainer alluded to it very directly, influencing my choice of gatekeeping as a specific descriptor for one of the perceived aspects of the role in this study.

The significance of context in shaping the role and contributing to its demands was again common to all four studies. Person-centred trainers saw their role as engaging them in balancing and negotiating differing and potentially conflicting
responsibilities, mediating, interfacing with and negotiating ‘differing cultural and structural terrains’. The integrative trainers saw the institutional framework as contributing significantly to the scale of demands and their conflicting nature, and as something they needed to try and manage. ‘Working within a wider context’ was a superordinate theme in the psychodynamic trainers’ accounts. Institutional contexts conditioned levels of autonomy enjoyed and the university setting brought pressures and deficiencies to be responded to. The shifting professional context similarly brought changes to be responded to and managed. For CBT trainers the institutional context loomed large and responding to shifting contexts was viewed as part of provision management.

We see therefore at first scrutiny a real paralleling in these accounts of the understanding of the role as depicted in the 1990s accounts. Strong similarities are also evident in the way that trainers experience the role. In negative terms, the earlier accounts had depicted the role as highly challenging and as potentially extremely stressful. Edwards (1998, p.49) had likened her experiences to ‘negotiating white water rapids’: McLeod’s (1995) research had demonstrated the widespread experiencing of the job as pressurised and stressful, and had talked personally of how the role had ‘at times left me feeling exhausted and utterly drained’ (p.163). Here, the person-centred trainers talked of feeling stretched, vulnerable and exposed, of feeling weighted by a sense of responsibility as well as one of constraint and compromise. Feeling challenged could tip into a sense of feeling personally damaged by the role in the short or longer term. Integrative trainers similarly reported the role as personally challenging, reporting feelings of inadequacy, vulnerability, depletion and constraint. The psychodynamic trainers’ list referred to feeling pressurised, vulnerable, burdened, worn down, stretched, unsupported, exhausted, depleted and pained. The CBT trainers’ experience was of frustration and anxiety and of feeling pressurised. They also reported a personally undermining sense of powerlessness, tiredness and a poor work-life balance. Integrative trainers experienced the role as challenging and for two of them, as currently unsatisfying.

These accounts lack the sense of Speedy’s (2000) third generation of ‘established professionals’. If anything, the sense is one of a continued ‘insecurity of tenure’
There is a sense, moreover, of new threat. The initial impression of similarity obscures elements of both continuity and discontinuity across time. While the wider context for training may be attributed as a source of challenge in both periods, there are discernible differences in the perceived nature of the contextual challenges and trainer responses. Authors in earlier texts had highlighted the lived sense of incompatibility, of feeling misunderstood, problematised and unsupported. They had highlighted the weight of bureaucratic demands and unhelpful nature of institutional policies and procedures (e.g. Connor, 1994; Johns, 1998; Waller, 2002). Trainers in McLeod’s (1995) study had cited organisational pressures as a cause of stress, linking it with under-resourcing and clashing value systems. These elements figured highly in the accounts in this study. However, there were new notes of threat and uncertainty linked with more recent changes. The perception of regulation as threat was evident in differing measures across the accounts of the person-centred, integrative and psychodynamic trainers but was perhaps strongest in the person-centred trainer accounts. Peggy talked of seeing the grits, you know, men in suits with bowler hats on. There’s something about, that’s where it’s all headed [421-423]. It was I.A.P.T. that was perceived as the most significant challenge for the CBT trainers, threatening recruitment as well as the integrity of CBT. The increasingly adverse economic context was also alluded to, as well as the need to demonstrate economic feasibility in a university environment increasingly run on market principles (see section 6.2.6.2. for further discussion). Overall, while problems of feeling accepted and supported effectively within organisational structures remained a problem area for counsellors across theoretical areas, they were supplemented by new concerns over future survival. Responding to shifting contexts had become part of management of the provision.

While the demands on the person stemming from the relational nature of the role remain significant across time, again the current picture is not clear-cut. While similar threads are contained in the trainer accounts in this study, there are marked differences for individual trainers, regardless of theoretical orientation. Some trainers connected much more strongly with a positive experiencing of the role. Mary (psychodynamic), Diane (person-centred) and Jack (CBT) stand out in this way. These three trainers spanned not only theoretical orientations but settings.
Mary worked in the private sector; Diane in F.E.; Jack in the university sector. Some trainers emphasised the relational demands as significant sources of stress (e.g. Lynne, psychodynamic); others posited stress firmly within the context of institutional demands and limitations (e.g. Dave, CBT).

One identifiable theme across the accounts, however, related to setting. The trainers who experienced themselves as least constrained and challenged by their setting were those in the private sector. While they did not identify their organisations as being intentionally non-profit making, Mary (psychodynamic) and Jane (person-centred) unfailingly used the term ‘independent’ sector, generally applied to organizations that are neither governmental nor for-profit businesses. This seemed to encapsulate their sense of prized independence and autonomy. So I like to be in places where I feel I’ve got some autonomy and I’m prized. And had the choice actually [Jane, 481-482].

It seems evident that there are factors at play in how trainers experience their role that are only partly accountable for by theoretical orientation. The accounts point to the potential importance of the work setting and undoubtedly its potentially negative impact is high-profile. There are however exceptions. Diane’s high-stress (see section 6.2.5) college environment seems not to have adversely impacted on her love of the work. Similarly Jack displays a developed sense of reward from the role despite the high-stress university environment (ibid). There is clear evidence in this research of the role as not only potentially intensely stressful but deeply rewarding, with the balance differing for each individual. Shifts in the balance could be short and long term. Both Frances and Peggy, in the person-centred study, had experienced a long-term decline in their sense of reward, as had Steve and Frank in the integrative study. More short-term shifts were evident, for instance, in Teresa’s (person-centred) and Lynne’s (psychodynamic) accounts. Both Lynne and Sue (psychodynamic) depicted the role as at times simultaneously high stress and high reward.

It is this sense of similarity and difference over time and within and between the current accounts that I take away from this section of the discussion. In the following section I look to see how the literature from the field of vocational
psychology might shine light on trainer motivations and their related sense of the job’s rewards and satisfactions and provide some explanation for these similarities and differences in experiencing of the role.

6.2.2 Motivation, reward and challenge

*Why be happy when you could be normal?*

Jeannette Winterson, 2011

A significant over-riding theme in the trainers’ accounts is the importance of meaning. Trainers were involved in something personally meaningful that could bring a profound sense of reward and/or sustain them though its stresses and difficulties. A loss of meaning seemed to accompany or precipitate a negative shift in the perceived balance of its rewards and costs. This was evident in the accounts of Peggy, Frances, Steve and Frank. Although feeling her meaning system under attack, almost despite herself, Sophie was not prepared to cede defeat: *What is it in me that just will not give up and roll over and say I can’t change anything? I’ve tried, but I can’t [975-977].*

The notion of vocational commitment is connected with notions of purpose and passion, with work as personally fulfilling and/or socially significant (Dik and Duffy, 2009). While career theory has depicted it as in decline, its dominance within the trainer discourse would seem to indicate otherwise. This would be in line with Orlinsky and Rønnessad’s (2005) findings that most therapists saw their work as a calling or vocation. It would complement Parr et al’s (1996) study of American counsellor trainers which found a belief amongst American trainers that their work was in tune with their personally-held values and of value to others. It would also reflect notions of vocation as actually holding increased relevance within the context of the rise of individualised career paths. The emergent boundaryless and protean career patterns, characterised by change and transition, geographic and social mobility, had been said to have led to a premium being placed on employability and marketability. However, boundaryless career literature has started to recognise the significance of meaning and purpose for the individual (Lips-Wiersma and McMorland, 2006). The protean career profile in
particular has been characterised as not only concerned with employability but with the achievement of personally meaningful goals, which may embrace making a contribution to society (Mirvis and Hall, 1996; Sargent and Domberger, 2007).

The career profiles and motivations of counselling trainers can be viewed within such lenses. The trainers in the studies had all followed individualised career paths. Occupational backgrounds included social work, professional musician, psychiatric nursing, teaching and lecturing. Career trajectories had traversed differing geographical areas. Peggy’s trajectory, for instance, had zig-zagged England and encompassed a shift from teacher (public sector) to counsellor (public and private sectors) to trainer (private and university sectors). Although not labelled as such, here in my journal I try and catch what I’m identifying:

03 December 2011
I keep hearing the term ‘personal journey’. I know it’s become part of common discourse, but it really seems pertinent somehow. People storying a personal narrative, making connections, catching threads. The importance of creativity in Sue’s journey, of public service in Sophie’s, of teaching in Mary’s…

In catching the differing threads, notions of employability, indeed questions of extrinsic rewards such as income, power and status, had not been high profile either within the individual accounts or across the studies as a whole. This does not mean they were absent. Frank, for instance, had talked of entering the university sector because he wanted academic status. Teresa had talked of the ‘perks’ of being a university lecturer. Andy had talked of enjoying the sense of power and status the role brought. Jenny had talked of simply needing a job. Moreover, perhaps less altruistic reasons for job choice were not so easy to air. As discussed in the literature review, a vocational commitment is still expected of certain occupational roles which include teaching (White, 2002) and extra pressure may have emanated from having a fellow trainer as interviewer.

With these codicils, these accounts demonstrate the significance of the intrinsic rewards of the role. With some noteworthy exceptions, the role was experienced
as personally rewarding and developmental on a range of levels across all the studies. The picture was varied and dynamic. The sense of reward could be experienced as fluctuating (e.g. Sue and Lynne, psychodynamic; Teresa, person-centred) or as having reduced over the long-term (e.g. Frances and Peggy, person-centred; Steve and Frank, integrative). The sense of reward could be dominant (e.g. Mary, psychodynamic; Diane, person-centred; Jack, CBT) or experienced as sitting alongside a strong sense of stress, challenge and pressure (e.g. Sue and Lynne, psychodynamic; Laura, integrative; Dave, CBT).

Moreover, trainers placed differing emphases on the source of reward. Some trainers placed an emphasis on the engaging nature of the task itself. The experience of flow or the sense of fun, mastery and enjoyment derived from the work itself (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990) was evident in the accounts of trainers across the theoretical schools: *I can’t imagine doing anything else now. It’s that buzz that it gives you* [Mary, 484-485]; *I do get an enormous buzz out of it. I’m galvanised by it, I’m excited* [Jack, 888-889].

A dominant theme was the pleasure derived from being part of students’ learning and development. This, however, indicates the difficulty there is in pinpointing source of reward. Apart from involvement in activities seen as inherently enjoyable, a second source of reward stems from involvement in a task that we are motivated to undertake (Ryan and Deci, 2000). This motivation again was evident in the accounts within all four studies and often (although not always) reflected in an enjoyment of at least some aspects of the role. Such motivations were expressed in a variety of forms. Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is useful as reference here:
Trainees’ needs and motivations could be related to esteem and relational needs. Frances (person-centred) saw her relational needs as currently being met within the role. Mary (psychodynamic) saw satisfaction of her need to feel valued as an important reward. Jenny (CBT) saw her parental needs as being met. Lynne (psychodynamic) spoke of her desire to be loved. More basic safety needs could also be met. This was strongest in Jack’s account. His psychological safety needs were being met, in contrast to his experience of burnout in a previous role: *It was the reason I left the Health Service* [469].

Motivations could also be linked to the ‘pinnacle’ of self-actualization. Again, with exceptions, this was threaded throughout the accounts across the studies, and links with a third area of motivation and reward, that of the experience of an ‘integrated wholeness’ of involvement in meaningful work (Chalofsky, 2003). Andy (integrative) talked of the role helping him towards wholeness: *what I learn from my practice and from my training feeds the ‘me’ – feeds the whole person and completes the picture* [715-717]. The importance of the meaning attached to the role, albeit differently nuanced, was apparent across the accounts. The focus could be outwards in terms of making a difference to the individual student, to
ensuring standards of practice, to the development of a profession, to the empowerment of people on a wider level, to serving humankind.

In the CBT trainers’ accounts, there was a strong sense of belief in CBT as a tool for helping and empowering both practitioners and clients, and of the trainers’ wish to contribute to the maintenance and development of standards of practice. For Sophie, this was part of a deeply-held commitment to the importance of a high quality public service. Within four of the five person-centred accounts, there was a strong sense of a lived commitment to the approach and a belief in its transformative potential. As Peggy said the person-centred approach is, for so many of us, is not just about a way of doing therapy, but is about a way of being, and almost like the life philosophy [341-343]. Teresa talked in terms of doing what she was intended to. In the psychodynamic accounts, meaning shifted between a commitment to being part of a developmental process for individuals, to serving others, to being part of a socially transformative project. Lynne talked of being part of a noble task [1381], of aspiring to make the world a better place [1400]. While the integrative trainers did not convey such an overt sense of being motivated by such meanings, a sense of an ‘integrated wholeness’ (Chalofsky, 2003) was apparent in the satisfaction of their personal needs within the role. Laura, for instance, spoke of the satisfaction derived from being part of students’ learning process: I enjoy watching people learn, and watching those light-bulb moments, all those slow burn moments, all those you know, that understanding. I love that [715-716]. It was also apparent in the sense of personal growth and development experienced. Dave saw this as a major reward of the role.

In summary, I found the motivation and rewards for trainers difficult to categorise. I return to my analogy of themes as joints of meat produced at the inevitable expense of the living animal. This was one section of the trainers’ account where it felt most apposite. Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy, with its separation of human needs and their placing within a hierarchy, can serve to obscure both their contemporaneous and interconnected nature. An activity can satisfy differing needs simultaneously in a way difficult to untangle. The relationship, for instance, between meeting personal needs and contributing to
others was so intertwined that the division felt almost false. Trainers themselves often recognised the connection. Jenny (CBT), for instance, wondered whether her wish to be part of developing others’ potential reflected her parental needs.

Temporal context is important. As Heidegger (2002) argued, fore-understanding is brought to each encounter with the world and the encounter interpreted in the light of prior experiences and meaning-making processes. Put simply, the past experience of trainers is significant to their interpretation of the role’s meaning and satisfactions in the present. As discussed, a declining sense of the role’s meaning can erode commitment to the role. Conversely, Diane’s (person-centred) and Jack’s (CBT) sense of personal rejuvenation needs to be contextualised within their previous unsatisfactory work experiences. For Mary (psychodynamic), the role was a furtherance of the value she had derived from her teaching role.

The life-stage developmental framework formulated by Super (1969, 1980, 1990) and developed by Savickas (1993, 2002) may well bear relevance here, with its characterisation of careers as consisting of both long term and short term cycles or stages of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and disengagement. Sargent and Domberger (2007) noted that those with a protean career profile may involve themselves more with a questioning of the fit between their career and values. Perhaps what we see here is a snapshot of people at differing points in the stages of growth, exploration, establishment, maintenance and disengagement, making differing reassessments based on differing valuing systems.

Overall, therefore, we see that the role is the source of substantial reward. Although not constant or uniform, there is an evident sense of a past or presently experienced ‘integrated wholeness’ of engagement in meaningful work across all the studies. Training seems potentially to meet the range of needs across Maslow’s hierarchy. For the majority of trainers across the studies, however, the sense of reward sat alongside a sense of cost or a more negative experiencing of the role, to which I now turn.
6.2.3 The person-environment fit

She was a straight-haired kid in a house full of curls
Sam Baker, Orphan, 2008

The trainer accounts of the 1990s had shown the setting as potentially problematic with trainers experiencing a value-clash and a struggle for acceptance. A wider debate concerning the appropriateness of the university setting has been played out within counselling (e.g. Berry and Woolfe, 1997; Horton, 2002; Loewenthal, 2002, 2009, 2010; Mace, 2002, Parker, 2002). The placing of counsellor training within differing university departments demonstrates not only its lack of easy fit but how trainers might need to navigate their way into and within differing communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). The nature of the vocational commitment of trainers can be seen as sitting uneasily alongside the bureaucratic and academic demands of the university setting. On a philosophical note, the sense of misfit may reflect the nature and place of counselling practitioners per se. Counselling has been described as a liminal activity, with counsellors acting as ‘liminal figures, who exist on the edge of social groups or institutions for the purpose of enabling individuals to re-enter the social world’ (McLeod, 2009, p.218). On a political note, as discussed later in this section, status and power dynamics may also be salient. Certainly the challenge of working in public sector settings, specifically the university and N.H.S., figured predominantly in the accounts in this research project. I move thus to explore how the wider literature might help inform the impact of setting on trainer experience in these studies.

Career theory has focused on the so-called ‘person-environment fit’ or how the sense of match between individual and organisational needs and motivations impacts on job satisfaction. Holland (1985, 1997) saw personality types as drawn to particular work environments, and research has provided some support for this belief. People seem to be attracted to environments where they can work in their preferred manner and with people similar to themselves (Fouad, 2007). Studies have demonstrated a link between personality type and occupational setting. Entrepreneurs, for example, value financial reward, independence and self-realisation (Carter et al., 2003).
This area of the literature points in a relatively straightforward manner to how those trainers outside the public sector might experience a strong sense of reward within the role. Mary and Jane were founding figures in their organisations and consequently were integral not only to the shaping of the organisational culture but also the constitution of the staff team. To use Mace’s (2002) analysis, trainers were able to assert the personal authority allowed within a closed institution. Frances looked back fondly to the sense of freedom and autonomy she had enjoyed in the ‘independent’ sector. Reading through Mary’s and Jane’s accounts, it is striking that they do not place reliance on support. It as if they are both held and contained by their organisational setting. It may also reflect that, as entrepreneurs, they are displaying their valuing of independence and self-realisation (Carter et al, 2003). Returning to the trainer accounts of the 1990s, it was the autonomy allowed outside the public sector that led Mearns (1997) to characterise the independent [sic] sector as the optimum setting for training.

The belief that those motivated by public service tend to be intrinsically motivated and attracted towards work in the public sector is more problematic (Perry & Wise, 1990, Houston, 2000). On the one hand, many of the trainers had a history of involvement in the public sector alongside an evident commitment to public service. However, this has not coincided with a sense of fit. It seems that the potential for ‘misfit’ increases as training moves away from independently and purpose-built environments. This may reflect shifts within public sector culture or it may specifically relate to university culture. The potential for cultural misfit and resultant isolation and marginalisation within university settings has certainly been pointed to by a range of commentators (e.g. Berry and Woolfe 1997; Loewenthal, 2002, 2009, 2010; Mace, 2002; Parker, 2002). On the one hand, there is still the tendency for university culture, especially within ‘old’ universities, to reward pure academic excellence. The ‘hierarchy in universities tends to sneer at professional training courses’ (Farrell, 2012, personal communication). Conversely the rising significance of economic capital and the consequent shift in the wider university habitus towards consumerist and market norms and values brings in new potential for incongruence.
Particularly vulnerable, it could be argued, are the so-called semi-professions, characterised by their connections with vocation, femininity and everyday lay activity (e.g. Acker, 1989; Abbott and Wallace, 1998). Such tensions are evident in the nursing literature. The drive towards school-centred initial teacher-training (S.C.I.T.T.) recently announced by the government (Dept. of Education, 2011) as well as the removal of government funding for masters degrees in teaching and learning could be argued to reflect the marginal status of teaching within universities. Gender does indeed seem highly pertinent to the discussion. Cotterill and Letherby (2005) talk of the ‘historical tradition of academia as a male space’ (p.109), of academic settings as connected with the masculine privileging of intellectuality and rationality. Not only are trainers and counsellors predominantly female, counsellor training with its connections with both caring and teaching can be viewed as a feminine activity (Abbott and Wallace, 1998). The classification of both caring and teaching as non-traditional occupational areas for men compounds this sense. Rizq’s (2007) analysis of the both the potential idealisation and denigration of counselling due to its connection with emotion can be cast in gender terms. Her analysis of such processes as responses to an unconsciously perceived threat to survival seems particularly pertinent given an increasingly conscious sense of such threat.

The literature on communities of practice is complementary to Bourdieu’s conceptualisation and provides insight on forces that may lead to a sense of exclusion, of being ‘in but not of’. Universities can be seen as sites of overlapping and potentially conflicting communities of practice. Handley et al (2006) highlight the potential for conflict and tension where individuals participate in more than one community of practice with differing practices and identity structures. Moreover, power dynamics operate within communities and powerful practitioners may deny access to novices (Handley et al, 2006). Reflecting Rizq’s (2007) psychoanalytic analysis, constraints on newcomers are strongest where they are seen to threaten the knowledge and practices of that community (Carlile, 2004). One could add to this opposition to newcomers who threaten the status of the community. The lower status of the semi-professions could be argued to make them constitute such a threat.
The literature also helps to shed light on how, as trainers, we may exercise choice in the positions we adopt towards the setting for our work. One response of new nurse educators to their sense of misfit had been hold on to existing practitioner identities rather than embrace new identities as academics (Boyd and Lawley, 2009). Mutch (2003) argues that individuals maintain some sense of personal agency through the adoption of differing forms of participation in the communities within which they practice. In situations where the individual participates in a number of communities, one potential response is to remain marginal within one of these ‘in order to avoid compromising his or her sense of self’ (Handley et al, 2006, p.648). Another potential choice is to adopt a contingent form of participation, i.e. to adapt ‘practice in ways which secure a continued sense of existential integrity whilst still notionally fitting in with community norms’ (ibid). Another option is to elect not to join one community. A further stance is what Handley et al (ibid) call a liminal one, the adopting of a ‘betwixt and between’ position engaging across differing communities but not identifying fully with either – a truly ‘in but not of’ position.

The trainers in these studies can be seen as negotiating a variety of positions. One way of avoiding conflict is to construct one’s own community of practice, which is how training set in the independent sector can be characterised. Peggy’s decision to leave the university setting can be characterised as the rejection of conflict. Chosen marginalisation is how Sophie’s (CBT) position could be characterised. While others might argue that she assumes a managerial position, she explicitly identified herself differently. This was important to her: Because it’s easier, obviously, to operate a critical position if you’re not a manager [625-626]. Others’ positions can be categorised as contingent, a position that can bring the reward of working co-operatively but effectively within a potentially adverse environment, establishing a presence and importantly, the chance to bring influence to bear on prevailing cultures. Teresa’s (person-centred) and Jack’s (CBT) positions, for instance might be characterised thus. Diane’s (person-centred) experience can be framed more than one way. Her experience could be understood in terms of her major community of practice (the college) remaining
unchanged, with her membership strengthened as becoming a trainer improved her experience of it. This would sit with my sense of her discourse as different from the other trainers in the person-centred study, more in tune with the college discourse as I had experienced it. The closest sense I had of someone as liminal was Frank, operating both within the university and the counsellor training communities but belonging to neither.

On a final note in this section, the protean career profile is evident in the career patterns of these individuals. This profile is characterised by individualised career paths, with ‘pursuing one’s path with a heart with the intensity of a calling’ (Hall, 2004, p.9). Such profiles are not characterised by organizational commitment and success is not valued in terms of advancement up an organizational hierarchy. If this analysis holds water, such individuals are not likely to fit well within highly bureaucratised institutional structures such as colleges and universities. For instance, his perception of the ‘questioning’ character of people attracted to the CBT trainer role is highlighted here by Dave:

*I don’t know how this reflects on me but they’re kind of interesting, approachable, they can, they, they get enthused about some projects, kind of over-academicalise things. Yeah. But they’ve got a kind of a way of exploring perspectives; won’t necessarily agree with the orthodoxies presented.* [800-806]

### 6.2.4 Training and stress

*The chains of tormented mankind are made out of red tape*

Frank Kafka (1883-1924)

The setting is accorded high significance in the understanding of the causes of work-related stress. The demand-control model (Karasek, 1979; Karasek and Theorell, 1990) highlights how high demands combine with limited control over how the work is undertaken to increase the risk of stress. The extended demand-control-support model (Johnson and Hall, 1988) adds the significance of limited
support. In the therapeutic field Orlinsky and Rønnestad (2005) found that lack of support within the work setting and restricted autonomy were the major predictors of stressful involvement. The effort-reward model (Siegrist, 1996) points to the significance of feeling that efforts are fairly rewarded. The HSE (2001) placed stress firmly within the work environment, shaped by levels of demands and control over how work is conducted, the level of support provided, quality of working relationships, clarity of role, the effective management of change by the organisation.

Unfortunately for trainers in the public sector, they are working within what are perceived as high stress environments. A raft of studies of U.K. universities provides compelling evidence (e.g. van Emmerik 2002; Winefield et al. 2003; Kinman and Jones, 2004; Kinman et al., 2006; Tytherleigh et al. 2005). The 2011 survey of UCU members working at colleges in England, Northern Ireland and Wales found similarly widespread experiencing of stress. If we add to this a lack of sense of ‘fit’, it is not surprising that stress defined as a sense of depletion, of feeling overwhelmed by a role’s demands, of struggling to cope (Mackay et al, 2004) is evident in the trainers’ accounts across the theoretical approaches.

Again parallels can be drawn with nursing, where nurse educators face challenges stemming from the professional preparatory nature of the programme combined with the ‘normal’ stressors at operation within the university environment. While there were differences of emphases, all nurse educators referred to the role’s demanding nature. Reported challenges included: time pressures; meeting all the role’s requirements; long working hours; lack of support; maintaining a work-life balance; lack of role clarity; needing to gain familiarity with university language and systems (e.g. Diekelmann, 2004; McArthur-Rouse, 2008; Boyd & Lawley, 2009; Boyd et al, 2009; Boyd and Smith, 2011; Smith and Boyd, 2012). The listed demands fit not only the stress models but also bear resemblance to the pressures contained in the trainer accounts.

The importance of setting, whatever the theoretical orientation of the course, is again evidenced by the lack of stress evident in both Mary’s (psychodynamic) and Jane’s (person-centred) accounts. Jane talks of having had quite a healthy life
Mary’s account lacks a stress discourse. It is also evident in the sense of pressure experienced by Dave with his ‘twin masters’ of the university and the N.H.S. Stressors related to the setting are woven into the accounts of the role’s challenges, although again it is difficult to divine precisely the source – is it the university environment per se or is it the challenge of trying to meet the particular demands of such a role within this setting?

The person-centred trainers felt challenged by aspects of the role that they directly linked to the setting. A perceived lack of support and valuing by the institution was evident. Peggy talked of the setting feeling like a cold and lonely place, of counsellor trainers a bit sort of huddled together in the cold winds blowing off the wider institution [318-320]. The demanding, inadequate and constraining nature of the context was a feature within the integrative trainers’ accounts. Steve talked of how fulfilling all the practical demands of the role translated into a benign self-slavery process [438]. The sheer weight of the administrative workload alongside the frustration resulting from the inadequacies of the environment figured highly in Laura’s account. As with the person-centred trainers, meeting the demands of the student body could bring a perceived need to protect them from this adverse environment. Again, the interplay between the environment and interpersonal processes within training is apparent. Andy makes evident the interplay between the environmental and intrapersonal. The challenge provided by the university setting was not expressed in terms of its constraints and limitations. It was how he was challenged to respond to its intellectual demands, to think more critically and academically. It felt personal:

And that was personal, it was a personal thing. It wasn’t me as a trainer – I couldn’t separate those things out. That was me that fell apart and lost confidence. [466-468]

In the psychodynamic study, while Mary’s account was stress-free, both Sue and Lynne’s accounts felt saturated with it. They experienced the university setting as deficient on a range of levels. However, it was interactions with students that figured most highly in their sense of feeling pressured and drained, although colouring such interactions was students’ exasperation with the setting. Moreover,
inadequate support from the university could make the pressures seem at times unbearable: *My experience last year as well was, I suppose, I guess, sort of symbolically, you know, lone parent, really* [Sue, 418-419].

All the CBT trainers highlighted the setting as a source of stress. As in the other studies, the administrative burdens, unhelpful systems, inadequate resources, lack of support and understanding were all identified as characteristics of their working environment. Dave’s working conditions, when assessed against the 2001 HSE list, placed him as at significant risk of high levels of stress. Jack’s account, however, re- emphasised the significance of previous experience. While acknowledging the unhelpful nature of his environment, he viewed it as a significant improvement on his previous experience. This may well be true for Diane (person-centred). She was used to the demands of an F.E. setting and had actually experienced a greater sense of autonomy and improved working environment as a result of her shift within F.E to counselling training.

We see, therefore, stress manifesting itself in a number of forms for individual trainers across all four studies. While people’s career history or trajectory influences their perceptions, settings seem a crucial variable across theoretical orientation. Universities and colleges are perceived by their staff as high-stress environments and feature many of the characteristics of poor work environments explored in the literature. Add to this cocktail a sense of misfit, as well as workloads made heavier by the professional training demands of such courses. It is to the particular nature of these demands that I now wish to turn this discussion.
6.2.5 Stress and burnout and the role’s particular demands

6.2.5.1 Professionally-related responsibilities

The role carries particular responsibilities relating to its connection with professional training. B.A.C.P. (2009) course accreditation requirements include a minimum number of contact hours, a supervised placement, specified areas of course content and the maintenance of effective ‘professional gatekeeping’ procedures. Such requirements place extra demands on courses in terms of staffing levels, rooming requirements, student contact hours, administrative responsibilities and parallel accountabilities. The lack of understanding of these particular requirements on the part of the university (and for Dave the N.H.S.) was an important thread in the trainer accounts, again across all the four theoretical approaches.

The nurse educator accounts highlighted how tutors could feel overwhelmed by the challenge of meeting the academic expectations arising from the university setting alongside fulfilling professionally-related requirements. For instance, new nursing lecturers reported underlying pressure to complete a doctorate and be research active alongside meeting a heavy teaching load (Smith and Boyd, 2012). Sue and Lynne (psychodynamic) and Jack (CBT) spoke of the difficulty of meeting the research expectations of their posts. This felt ironic as all three wanted to be engaged in research and saw it as developmental but felt squeezed by time pressures. Sue talked of her sense of unfair treatment - another factor in stress according to the literature.

Such demands potentially add to what is already a widely-acknowledged stressful role. Two of the occupational groups picked out by the 2008/9 Labour Force Survey as particularly susceptible to stress are ‘teaching and research professionals’ and ‘health and social welfare associate professionals’. The role could be seen as spanning both, especially when two other characteristics of the trainer’s role are factored in - those connected to the so-called ‘emotional labour’ and ‘gatekeeping’ aspects of the role. It is to these aspects that I now turn to see
how the literature might help enlighten the intense sense of the role’s rewards and challenges in these areas that are evident across these accounts as a whole.

**6.2.5.2 Emotional labour**

*My candle burns at both ends;*

*It will not last the night;*

*But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends--*

*It gives a lovely light!*

Edna St Vincent Millay, *A Few Figs from Thistles*, 1920

Emotional labour has been argued as integral to any work that involves contact with people (Gray, 2009). It is work that involves the emotions and the management of emotions in self and other (Smith and Lorentzon, 2005, 2007). It involves producing a caring and safe environment for others (Hochschild, 1983). The parallels with counsellor training are evident and connections have indeed been made (e.g. Loewenthal and Snell, 2008).

Trainers saw themselves as involved in the development of people as practitioners within the context of a relationship, although accounts differed about the nature and parameters of the relationship. The emotional labour components of the role were very high profile in some but not all trainer accounts. There was some sense of patterning in this. As might be anticipated, it was strongly evident in the person-centred accounts, with four of the five trainers according it fundamentality. The bringing of self into the role in an open and authentic manner, a deep level of engagement with group processes and a lived commitment to equality and power-sharing all characterised this relationship. My experience of person-centred training has been of the importance placed on community: these accounts painted a rich picture of immersion in a course-level community of practice (Wenger, 1998).
The picture in both the psychodynamic and integrative accounts was rather more divergent and nuanced. While all psychodynamic tutors viewed the holding and containment of students as important, there were much greater overtones of emotional labour in Lynne and Sue’s accounts. Both saw the role as requiring them to bring themselves into their contacts with students in an authentic, personal and, within bounds, self-disclosing manner, which resonated with the person-centred accounts. Mary’s account emphasised the importance of combining support with challenge but there was a stronger sense of managing or lightening potential difficulties by the use of fun and humour. The integrative accounts generally placed less emphasis on the interpersonal aspects of the role, although two, Laura and Steve, saw relationship-building and the holding and containing of groups as part of creating a learning environment. In terms of the CBT trainers, there was an overall shift of emphasis away from the emotional labour component of the role. In this their accounts more closely resembled that of Mary’s psychodynamic account. However, this did not mean that interpersonal relationships were ignored. All aimed to build effective relationships with students and respond to their differing needs. Support and challenge were part of the package. Perhaps reflecting Jenny’s greater identification with a more relationally-based CBT, her approach was in greater proximity to the holding and containing function as described by the psychodynamic counsellor trainers.

Undoubtedly this facet of the role contributes significantly to the sense of the role’s rewards (see 6.3). Engaging with others in a developmental process, witnessing students change and develop, feeling changed oneself - all formed essential components of the role’s rewards across the studies: *I just love seeing people’s growth through the whole progress, it’s lovely* [Teresa, 241-242]. There was a sense of vicarious growth and renewal in this, a process identified as potentially present in counsellors’ work with clients (e.g. Rønnestad and Skovholt, 2003; Tedesci and Calhoun, 2004; Arnold et al, 2005).

However, while providing a substantial source of reward and indeed motivation, emotional labour can add to the potential for stress and burn-out. The three indicators of burn-out, emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and a reduced sense of accomplishment (Maslach, 1982; Maslach and Jackson, 1981, 1993), are
all present in these accounts. Without according my interpretations a diagnostic status, I would identify high levels of emotional exhaustion in Frances and Peggy’s person-centred accounts as well as Sue and Lynne’s psychodynamic accounts. In the integrative accounts, Steve was showing signs of emotional exhaustion and a reduced sense of proficiency while Frank was showing signs of depersonalisation alongside a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. In the CBT accounts, both Dave and Sophie displayed a sense of emotional exhaustion.

Maslach and Leiter (1997) cite six causes of burnout – work overload, lack of control, insufficient reward, breakdown in community, absence of fairness, and conflicting values. A depth and length of engagement with intense group processes could contribute to such causes. As I briefly explored in the literature review, the group is the potential site for the playing out of powerful interpersonal dynamics. In psychodynamic terms, issues around trust and dependency, authority and control, and competition and rivalry can be played out, accompanied by processes of splitting, projection, transference and countertransference (Bion, 1961; Jacobs, 1991, 2006, 2010; Connor, 1994). Using a socio-political lens, people bring in power and status based on their economic, cultural and social position within society, and the group can act as an arena for the playing-out of wider social dynamics (e.g. Yalom, 1980).

Groups thus are potentially powerful cocktails, with tutors as likely targets for projections and transferences, both negative and positive. At the same time, tutor responses are bound by a combination of professional and institutional codes of conduct, policies and procedures. Their conduct is also shaped by the norms of their theoretical community of practice. This brings the role closely in line with one of the characteristics of emotional labour - a degree of control over emotional expression (Smith and Lorentzon, 2005, 2007). Standing out for me are Frances and Peggy (person-centred), Sue and Lynne (psychodynamic). The need to hold and contain their responses could add to the sense of stress. One of the ‘dangerous’ emotions to express, it seems, is that of anger, an unacceptability somehow mirrored in the language used: what I want to do is say you know, fuck off and grow up, and take some responsibility [Frances, 215-216]. The combination of authentic engagement with powerful processes within an often
inadequate and unsupportive environment had at times proved overwhelming and in the long term exhausting. It is worth noting here that unlike the requirements for individual counsellor accreditation, B.A.C.P. (2009) does not specify the frequency or form of consultant supervision required for tutors of accredited courses.

The literature on deep and surface acting may enlighten here. In surface acting, where the authentic expression of emotion is avoided, the sense of dissonance produced can lead to stress and burnout (Hochschild, 1979, 1983). In deep acting, workers attempt to maintain authenticity by matching their internal responses to their external ones, usually by engaging with the emotions of the other. Such an approach is argued as less likely to lead to burnout as it minimises dissonance and feeds a sense of accomplishment (Brotheridge and Grandey, 2002). I would argue that controlling one’s responses in powerfully-charged circumstances while finding a way to respond appropriately and developmentally for the student(s) is a hard call. The deeper the level of personal engagement, it seems, the greater the potential challenge. However it also leads to the greater sense of reward following from its successful accomplishment. This is reflected in this quote from Sue:

……when it’s terribly stressful and awful or when it’s going better I think part of what makes that is in the end the same thing. It’s something about taking the risk to really bring myself and sometimes when it gets too much that’s absolutely what I really don’t want to do. I just want to hide and lie low and lick my wounds. But it’s also what I think makes it much more satisfying as well; those moments when someone goes - aha, get it. [278-283]

6.2.6 The impact of wider professional and educational currents

I shift emphasis here to positioning the findings more firmly within the broader educational and professional discourses. Heidegger’s concept of Dasein or ‘being-in-the-world’ places human existence firmly within a worldly context. In Pilgrim’s terms, I wish to shine light on the wider horizon. I have already touched on these areas within previous areas of the discussion. In this section I take more
of a ‘helicopter’ view of how trainers’ experiences and understandings can be positioned within such a wider context.

### 6.2.6.1 The professional project

Professionalisation has been viewed through a number of lenses. Earlier academic discussion focused on the benign nature of the professions (MacDonald, 1995). More negative views emerged from the 1960s, painting their character as self-interested and exclusive rather than altruistic and benign, as self-congratulatory rather than reflexively self-critical (e.g. Illich, 1977; Abbott, 1988; Larson, 1990). Attention shifted to the professional project, viewed as a collective attempt at social advancement and state-backed autonomy (Friedson, 1970a, 1970b, 1986; Larson, 1990). Feminist work added the dimension of gender. Professionalisation was equated with the pursuit and reassertion of male privilege (e.g. Hearn, 1982; Witz, 1990). Teachers’ and nurses’ struggle to achieve professional status and their designation as semi-professions is said to reflect their feminine basis (Abbott and Wallace, 1998).

Abbott depicted the professionalization process as a competitive one, with occupational groups vying to attain and maintain jurisdiction over different territories. Pilgrim (1991, 1992, 1997) points to the consequent drive to self-promote, to emphasise ‘specialness’ within this competitive process:

> ‘Over the past ten years, professionalisation and its attendant self-congratulation have been a hallmark of psychologists, therapists and counsellors. Contemporary professional norms encourage us to proclaim the strengths we have (particularly our unique “skills” and “techniques”)’ (1991, p.53).

Whatever the individual and/or collective motive for the professional project, the siting of training within the university setting is seen as key. I have already discussed some of the potentials for misfit in this chapter and this perhaps adds another dimension – that of the professional project leading us to mark ourselves
out as different, as ‘other’. I question this in my journal: I am challenging ‘me’ and ‘us’ here:

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Who are we and where do we fit as a group? We speak pejoratively of the medical model then wonder why we feel on the fringe and vulnerable within health settings. We speak pejoratively especially in person-centred communities about intellectualising and then moan we’re on the fringe in academic settings. It seems we want to belong but on our terms and it seems that the more that we have become part of institutional structures the more we are unhappy…

Ironically, this extract also points to our potential discomfort with the professional project. The question returns to the nature of the vocational commitment evident throughout the trainer accounts. Some accounts more closely reflect the notion of counselling as standing ‘for progressive humanism and against conservative scientism’ (Pilgrim, 1991, p.52). As Pilgrim commented, psychotherapy was attractive to the ‘libertarians of the left’ (p.54) in the second part of the twentieth century who saw themselves as part of a radical project. Such motivations would sit uneasily with the professional project and are evident in texts of opponents to regulation (e.g. Mowbray, 1995, 1997, 1999). As might be expected, the person-centred accounts display the strongest evidence of such motivation and the strongest sense of threat from professionalisation and regulation:

James Hillman says something about – I can’t do soul work in a profession that’s lost its soul. Which feels a bit of a harsh indictment, but that is my sense [Peggy, 419-421].

The sense of a radical project is there also in the psychodynamic accounts, although more evidently in Lynne and Sue’s accounts. There was not however the same sense of threat. Perhaps this extract from Lynne sheds some light:

I don’t see professionalism as a dirty word. I think it can be seen in that way. I don’t see it as interfering with - I used the word “professional”
with one of my person-centred interviewees once. It was almost like I’d said - she was horrified that I was referring to her as a professional because it would be seen as this barrier to creating this relationship with me. It would be seen as taking on authority in the role. We don’t have the same problem in psychodynamic. [1039-1047]

Moreover the valuing of research, identified strongly with professionalisation processes in the literature, was evident on Lynne and Sue’s part. The voice of dissent in the psychodynamic study was Mary, who demonstrated the oft-noted lack of engagement with research on the part of practitioners (e.g. Cohen et al, 1986; Polkinghorne, 1992).

It is harder to come to any firm conclusion concerning the integrative trainers. At times there were hints of a radical project: Steve, for instance, talked of his regret at what he perceived as the loss of idealism amongst counselling students; Frank talked of his involvement in radical projects in his past; Laura spoke of her fear of it becoming a middle-class project. While the regulatory proposals were engendering uncertainty, a palpable sense of threat was absent.

The greatest ease with the professional project was evident in the accounts of the CBT trainers. Professionalism carried positive overtones, mirrored in my choice of ‘delivering a professional education’ as a key superordinate theme. While the bureaucratic, unsupportive nature of the environment posed substantial demands on CBT trainers, there was no sense of unease with the world of the intellect. The emphasis on the development of critical thinking and evidence-based practice brought it in line much more with the professional project. While vocational commitment was absolutely evident here, it was rooted more in involvement in practices that worked. It was the proven efficacy of CBT techniques and thus the potential to empower practitioners and clients alike that was significant. Hence the area of threat was not professionalisation but arguably deprofessionalisation. I.A.P.T. was seen as posing a threat to CBT’s professional standing and integrity. The sense of the educational project in the CBT accounts also brings it more closely into line with the scientist-practitioner model, which has been suggested as an appropriate model for counsellor training within the new climate (e.g.
6.2.6.2 Educational discourses

As explored in the literature review, there has been a developing and increasingly complex educational discourse over the course of the twenty and twenty-first centuries. On the one hand, there has been innovation and change in the understanding and practice of teaching and learning. Interactive learning methods, experiential learning, learning as a holistic process, learning rooted in students’ real-life experiences – all had become part of educational discourse by the end of the twentieth century. As Illeris (2009) commented, by the twenty-first century concepts of learning had expanded to incorporate the emotional, social and societal. ‘Teaching and learning methods’ or ‘learning and teaching methods’ had become part of the rubric of course delivery and design.

At the same time, the university sector was experiencing increasing external control. Universities were being called to account in terms of new managerialism. New systems of quality control and accountability were introduced, alongside the notion of students as consumers with rights. At the same time, rising student numbers combined with substantial funding cuts to put pressure on the ability of universities to meet student expectations. On the one side, there sits a drive to reduce costs and increase income, on the other the necessity to produce an attractive educational commodity. Added to this cocktail is the impact of rising student fees in a time of economic recession and restricted job opportunities. Value for money counts: as a student informed me recently, he had calculated that he was investing £80 per day in his masters programme. Universities are increasingly valued in terms of their capacity to produce economic rather than academic capital (Bourdieu, 1988; Naidoo and Jamieson, 2005). Moreover, there has been growing criticism of more progressive educational approaches as not adequately preparing citizens for the world of work. One product has been the entrenchment of competency-based learning outcomes, which have come to form the basis not only of course design but of quality assurance systems. Cost-
efficiency, accountability and marketability are new dominant threads in the discourse.

Such backdrops help further contextualise trainers’ experiences. CBT matches the educational discourse on a number of levels. While CBT training is cost-intensive due to the professional training requirements, it also recruits successfully. It embraces a variety of teaching methods from the more traditional pedagogic to more problem-based inquiry approaches in line with wider university norms. It is an attractive commodity with a strong evidence-base and acceptance as a treatment of merit for depression and anxiety within N.I.C.E. guidelines. The centrality accorded within education to competency-based learning outcomes fits with CBT’s evidence-based approach. Difficulty with the notion or means of assessment does not appear in the CBT accounts. This comment from Dave, while potentially reflecting the continued influence of neo-behavioural theories on practice, also can be viewed as evidencing complementarity of discourse:

_The more I understand about educational theories, the less convinced I am that, really, we’re doing CBT principles in the context of education. I think we’re doing, just doing education._ [640-642]

Such a complementarity was less evident in the other accounts. There was a sense of match and mismatch and also some sense of opposition. Moreover, high staff-student ratios and high fees in a context of restricted employment opportunities make non-CBT counsellor training potentially less attractive as a commodity for both consumers and the university setting. The person-centred trainers (largely although not exclusively) allied themselves with relationship rather than technique, personal empowerment and transformation rather than intellectual development. The accounts lacked reference to critical thinking or evidence-based practice. This jars with elements of the educational discourse. The focus on personal change is potentially at odds with assessment based on competency-based learning outcomes. A level of disengagement with the diversity of teaching and learning methods available may lead to estrangement not only from the norms of the setting but the desires of consumers. As might be anticipated, the psychodynamic trainers similarly emphasise facilitation, relationship and personal
development, and more strongly resemble the reflective practitioner model. It was indeed psychoanalytic supervision that contributed to Schön’s model for the practicum. Again the potential for congruence and incongruence with wider educational discourse is evident. The same threats are posed by the commodification of learning that has accompanied recent economic and political changes.

Integrative trainers demonstrated understandings that reflected those of the CBT, psychodynamic and person-centred trainers. With the benefit of hindsight, this does not seem surprising. Trainers placed emphasis on differing areas but the role was seen as encompassing not only facilitation, relationship and personal development but also teaching and the development of critical thinking. One could argue that this might bring them into a difficult marriage of the scientist-practitioner and reflective practitioner models. It also could bring them more into line with the diversity of teaching and learning models that characterise the modern educational sector. It also has the potential for them to produce a more attractive educational commodity given that the majority of therapists end up defining themselves as integrative (Orlinsky & Rønnestad, 2005) and the continued lack of convincing evidence of the superior effectiveness of any particular approach (Cooper, 2008).

On a final note in this section, the quantity and, perhaps more significantly, the perceived quality of counselling-related research is pertinent to the positioning of training within the higher education sector. As discussed in chapter two (see section 2.2.1.2.1), a strong research profile is prioritised within the university sector, particularly within those institutions seeking to enhance or maintain the strength of their position (e.g. the Russell Group). As discussed earlier in this section, CBT has a developed research profile which strengthens its presence within the H.E. sector. As examined in section 2.3.2., there has been a drive across the counselling field to construct an effective research base for both counselling and counsellor training. The BACP Researcher Network was established in 1997 with the specific aim of developing a research culture within BACP. Such moves can be argued to have enhanced counselling’s credibility within the higher education sector. However, challenges remain to be faced.
While a large amount of practitioner research is undertaken as part of masters, doctorate and Ph.D. study, there is a relatively small amount of this potentially rich reservoir published (BACP, 2012). As discussed in chapter two (see section 2.2.1.2.1) the categories for return under the REF are problematic for counselling trainers. For instance, at the University of Manchester, counsellor training’s situation within the school of education has made for the likelihood of the majority of the research-active training team not being included in the latest REF return. Heavy teaching loads put counsellor trainers at a disadvantage vis-à-vis other academic groups in terms of pursuing high-profile research activity. The potential to gain highly profitable and prestigious research contracts is at this point limited. While there are limits on our potential to become ‘major players’ in the research field, there are indications of our potential to build a substantial and varied portfolio.
6.3 STANDING BACK ONE STEP: A FIRST OVERVIEW

Here I tentatively identify some initial superordinate themes across the four studies. I am reminded of making a french plait. It involves a smoothing and weaving of hair much as my attempt here with the narrative strands. The individual hairs start to merge into a plait of my making - I move nearer the danger of the imposition of meaning. I shall discuss in greater depth my sense of such tensions in chapter 7 and their unavoidability in a qualitative research project. I stayed with my project of ensuring that all I might conjecture can be rooted back to the words of the trainers, that these meanings were indeed co-constructed. Here are the strands I identified/co-constructed:

6.3.1 A continuing picture of a multi-dimensional, high stress-high reward role

When contextualised within the texts of the 1990s, the texts provided me with a sense of continuity in terms of how trainers both understand and experience the role. This is interesting in itself given the shifting nature of the wider contexts and the developing nature of the counselling field. We are no longer the ingénues; counselling is now a significant activity undertaken across the public, voluntary and private sectors. I might have expected this to be reflected in a significant shift in both the understanding and experience of the role.

In terms of the understanding of the role, the earlier accounts had focused on the role’s multifacetedness, its relational and multi-tasking nature, and its professional gatekeeping aspect. These were all carried out in an institutional context and integral to the role was finding ways of meeting the demands of the institution as well as negotiating its deficiencies. Responding to such a variety of demands from a variety of different sources in a context largely experienced as unsupportive combined to place intense demands on the person of the trainer. The role was experienced as high stress. Alongside this, although less reported and hence easier to overlook, was a sense of the role’s rewards. In McLeod’s 1995 study, trainers communicated their sense of privilege, of their own personal development, of the
enjoyment and reward derived from relationships with colleagues and students and the witnessing of students’ progress.

Such a picture was also evident in these accounts in their entirety. The relational nature of the role figured in differing form and measure in all the studies. The multitasking nature and the challenge of meeting all the differing demands was a thread across the different studies. An acknowledgment of the gatekeeping aspect of the role was again common to all four studies, as was interacting with the wider institutional context. As in the earlier accounts, the picture painted was one of high stress alongside high reward. A similar picture of stress related to the inter-relational demands of the role, lack of support, organisational pressures and workload was present across time. On the plus side, the sense of reward from ‘contact’, ‘learning’ and ‘the development of trainees’ reported in McLeod’s 1995 study had strong resonances in the studies here.

6.3.2 Similarity and difference of understanding and experience across and within theoretical schools

While a similarity of ‘ingredients’ can be identified, this can obscure differences in the understanding and experience of the role. A difference of emphasis was evident in the understanding and experiencing of the role both between the different studies and between individuals within the studies. For instance, while relating with students was common to all the accounts, there were differences in the understanding of the nature of such relating. The person-centred accounts, for instance, were dominated by the notion of deep authentic engagement while the CBT accounts portrayed a relatively more ‘orthodox’ student-tutor relationship, albeit one characterised by a commitment to strong pastoral care. The psychodynamic and integrative accounts were more mixed, although two of the three psychodynamic trainers allied themselves strongly with the significance of deep authentic engagement. Similarly, there were some discernible differences between studies in the overall high stress – high reward picture. A major source of stress, for instance, for the CBT trainers seemed to stem from the range and extent of demands and pressures. In contrast, the emotional labour component of the role
figured more highly as a source of stress in the accounts of both the person-centred and psychodynamic trainers.

Moreover, there were some significant differences within studies. For instance, Diane’s understanding of the role differed significantly from the other four person-centred trainers, as did Mary’s from the other two psychodynamic trainers. In terms of the experience of the role, some trainers connected much more strongly with the positive experience of the role, while others communicated a much more negative experiencing. This did not seem connected to theoretical orientation. One apparent factor was setting: the trainers who felt least constrained and challenged by their setting worked in the private sector. Another factor related to career history and whether the training role was perceived as an improvement on previous work experience. This highlights the dynamic nature of experiencing and the nature of this research project. It was a snapshot of individual professional lives at a particular point. As the trainers indicated, the experience of the role was a dynamic and shifting one both in the short and longer term.

6.3.3 The significance of vocational commitment

The rewards and costs of the role of the role can be understood in terms of the motivations that had brought trainers to the role. If understood in terms of Maslow’s hierarchy (1943), needs spanning the whole hierarchy may be met within the role. The particular ingredients varied for individual trainers and career paths were varied but notions of service to others were strong across all studies. A significant over-riding theme in the trainers’ accounts was the importance of meaning in the work or its intrinsic reward.

This complemented Orlinsky and Rønnestad’s (2005) findings that most therapists saw their work as a calling or vocation and Parr et al’s (1996) study of American counsellor trainers which found that American trainers believed that their work was in tune with their personally-held values and of value to others. It also sat well with the notion of the continued significance of meaning in the new ‘boundaryless career’ era. The trainers’ career paths here reflected the protean career profile, one within which individuals construct their career path based upon
their personal values and measure their success on subjective success criteria (Hall, 1976). They all demonstrated individual career paths or journeys, although the dominance of the public sector and/or traditionally female occupational sectors (e.g. teaching, social work, nursing) within their history was evident. They also can be seen as at different points on their journeys. Their sense of shifting meaning can also be understood within the context of Super’s (1969, 1980, 1990) life-stage developmental framework. For some trainers, a loss of meaning in the longer term had led to a parallel disengagement. For two person-centred trainers, Peggy and Frances, this was connected in part with professionalisation processes. For some trainers, a resurgence of meaning had brought a renewed sense of engagement. This was evident within one person-centred account (Diane) and most strikingly in one CBT account (Jack).

6.3.4 A sense of misfit within institutional settings

The challenge of working in public sector settings, specifically the university and N.H.S., figured predominantly in the accounts in these studies. Career theory has focused on the importance of the ‘person-environment fit’ or the match between individual and organisational needs and motivations in terms of job satisfaction. A strong asset for trainers in the private sector was their ability to construct the environment to fit their needs and motivations, which included the freedom to carry out the role in what they perceived as a responsible and personally accountable manner. To utilise Mace’s (2002) distinction, it provides the opportunity to impose a closed model based on personal authority and internal standards.

The sense of ‘misfit’ identified in the earlier accounts continued as a strong thread in the accounts of trainers across theoretical orientations working in the public sector. One potential factor may be the lack of fit between the protean career profile and that of the often highly bureaucratised and controlled environments of both the health and educational sectors. Another may be the nature of their vocational commitment, experienced as at odds with wider institutional culture.
Communities of practice literature (Wenger, 1998) provides a useful way of conceptualising this. There is a strong potential for conflict and tension when individuals are required to participate in more than one community with differing practices and identity structures (Handley et al, 2006). Moreover, power dynamics operate within communities and communities may resist newcomers perceived as potential threats (Carlile, 2004). This interacts with the stance assumed by newcomers which despite, my argument to the contrary, perhaps we are still perceived as and/or perceive ourselves. The trainers in these studies can be seen as negotiating a variety of positions including the marginal, contingent and liminal. It can be argued that the adoption of such positions emerges from the interplay of external forces and individual decision-making. What can be said is that there is the lack of a sense of trainers as full members of the wider community of practice. There is also a lack of expressed common cause with other staff groups (e.g. in teacher or nurse education) who may face similar dilemmas, contact with whom was painted as a potential advantage of working in the university sector by Berry and Wolfe (1997).

6.3.5 The nature of the work and its setting combining to increase the likelihood of stress and burnout

Carrying a sense of misfit within settings themselves characterised by high stress levels adds to the potential for stress on the part of trainers. As explored in section 2.5.1, a developed body of theory and research places the work setting central to workers’ experience of stress. A similarly developed body of research depicts university and college staff reporting high and increasing levels of stress. Many of the reported stressors reflect those expressed by the trainers: unclear and conflicting roles; heavy workloads; long hours; limited support; poor promotion prospects; insecurity of employment; poor work-life balance. Moreover, the trainers did not just express a sense of misfit but one of ineffective support or downright unhelpfulness. Given that lack of support is commonly accepted as a key factor in stress, it is not surprising that trainers in such settings express their sense of depletion, of feeling overwhelmed, of struggling at times to cope. The lack of stress evident in the accounts of the trainers in the private sector adds weight to such an understanding. However, set against this more general picture
are the individual exceptions, which demonstrated the importance of past experience in how people perceive their sense of the role. Jack and Diane, both in the public sector, did not depict the role as highly-stressed; their experience had been one of an improved quality of work-experience.

The specific nature of the role adds further vulnerability to stress, tipping over potentially into burnout, as characterised by emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and a reduced sense of competence (Maslach, 1986; Maslach and Jackson, 1981, 1993). Workloads are increased by the professional training demands of the programmes, to be met alongside the ‘normal’ demands placed on academics, for example, to research and publish. Of particular import is the emotional labour aspect of the role, argued to be an important factor in the experience of both stress and burnout (see section 2.5.3). The interpersonal nature of the role provided a strong source of reward and a consequent sense of personal growth and development for the trainers. My journal captured my attempts to describe this: I tried phrases such as ‘vicarious excitement’ and ‘vicarious renewal’. However, as touched on, groups can be the setting for intense interpersonal dynamics with the tutor at the centre. The interpersonal aspects of the role can simultaneously act as the source for a level of stress that can tip over into burnout. This was most strongly evident in the accounts of the person-centred and psychodynamic trainers, where there was the strongest identification with the use of self in authentic engagement with group processes. Where there was less of a sense of personal engagement, a stronger sense of a process managed rather than worked with, the potential for stress from this source seemed reduced. The CBT trainers, perhaps reflecting their theoretical base, did not emphasise the emotional labour component of the role or identify it as a major source of stress. The picture in the integrative accounts was, as might be anticipated, a mixed one.

Such divergence in ways of relating may well help shed light on the balance of stress and reward within the role and its attributed causes. Generally however, whatever the cause, there was evidence of burnout across the studies. Frances and Peggy (person-centred) and Sue and Lynne (psychodynamic) all exhibited high levels of emotional exhaustion. In the integrative accounts, Steve was showing signs of emotional exhaustion and a reduced sense of proficiency while Frank was
showing signs of depersonalisation alongside a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Both Dave and Sophie (CBT) displayed a sense of emotional exhaustion. Although it has been argued that women may be more prone to emotional exhaustion and men to depersonalisation (Purvanova and Muros, 2010), it is hard to draw any conclusion on the relationship between gender and burnout on the back of these studies. What is noteworthy, however, is that symptoms of burnout were identifiable in eight of the sixteen trainers.

6.3.6 The uncertainties, vulnerabilities and pressures generated by the shifting professional, political, economic and educational contexts

Counsellor trainers, as part of the counselling field, are subject to the economic, social, cultural and political changes acting on its environment. The impact of reduced public spending, a surging demand for evidence-based practice, the introduction of I.A.P.T. and the attempted move towards state regulation can be identified in these accounts. While the regulatory threat has now been removed, the other challenges remain current and arguably may now have been supplemented by new ones stemming from the failure to gain the accompanying recognition.

A major opponent depicted regulatory moves as led by the self-interest of the ‘training business’ (Mowbray, 1995). If that is so, it is not transparent in these accounts. What is evidenced is differing levels of comfort and discomfort with the professional project. For some professional and vocational commitment sat more easily beside each other. This was true for the CBT trainers, who viewed professionalism positively, equating it with high standards, effectiveness and integrity. It was I.A.P.T. that was seen as the major threat, with its potential erosion of CBT’s standing and integrity. The accounts that showed the greatest sense of threat from increased professionalisation on ideological grounds were the person-centred ones, reflecting their stronger connection with ‘progressive humanism and against conservative scientism’ (Pilgrim, 1991, p.52). Such responses were also evident in the accounts of the integrative and psychodynamic trainers but were balanced in differing measure with pragmatism, optimism and quite simply a level of ‘not knowing’.
Other areas of threat can be situated in the sense of match or mismatch with shifting educational discourse and priorities. In many ways, there is the strongest sense of match between CBT and elements of the current educational discourse. It is an attractive commodity with its strong evidence-base and public profile. It embraces a variety of teaching methods in line with wider university norms and competency-based learning outcomes complement its more scientist-practitioner approach. I.A.P.T. can be viewed in such terms as a threat to its value as an educational commodity. This sense of complementarity with recent discourse was less evident elsewhere and sets part of the context potentially for the sense of vulnerability expressed directly and indirectly in many of the accounts. An approach based on authentic contact can contravene the norms of the wider culture. The focus on personal change within the integrative, person-centred and psychodynamic accounts is potentially at odds with assessment based on competency-based learning outcomes. Moreover, high staff-student ratios and high fees in a context of restricted employment opportunities make non-CBT counsellor training potentially less attractive as a commodity for both consumer and the work setting. As an integrative trainer, on a more optimistic note, there is some potential to remain as an attractive educational commodity given the absence of convincing evidence of one approach’s superior effectiveness.

6.3.7 Trainers living out individual personal and professional journeys

This theme attempts to capture the nature of the trainers’ engagement with their role. I caught in section 6.2.2 my sense of trainers as being on personal journeys. Trainers were constructing their own subjective, individualised career paths (Lips-Wiersma and McMorland, 2006), starting in differing places and facing in differing directions. As discussed in chapter two (see section 2.4.2.5) Savickas (1993, 2002) saw careers as shaped around individual self-concepts which are developed and actualised in a lifelong, co-constructive project. As this implies, the personal and the private, the past and the present are all interwoven. This seems an apposite way of conceptualising the trainers’ understandings and experiencing. I caught no sense of the role as a ‘compartmentalised’ part of people’s existence. As discussed in section 6.2.2, the role could meet the variety
of needs across Maslow’s (1943) in a manner difficult to separate and untangle. The recurrence of ‘the use of self as a key resource’ as a theme in the accounts points indeed to the role as a ‘way of being’ (Rogers, 1980). This implies that the trainer shapes the role as much as is shaped by it: it is a co-constructive project. Perhaps enmeshment is a potential descriptor not only for my experience as a researcher but also for how trainers construct and live out their role.

It is difficult to pay full credit to this aspect while protecting trainer anonymity. As discussed in chapter four (see section 4.10), this is a public role which has necessitated extra care in the obscuring of potentially identifying characteristics. An added sense of responsibility was derived from my enmeshment in the research, which I pursue further in chapter seven. Pertinent to discussion here, I knew aspects of the personal lives of some of these trainers not revealed in the interviews but which shone significant light on their understandings and experiencing. It would be unethical to reveal these. Moreover, my self-disclosure as a trainer had attracted some negative consequences, leaving me sensitive, perhaps over-sensitive, to its potential. My initial impulse was to construct a carapace of non-specificity to protect individual privacy. On further reflection, I recognise at least the possibility of sketching some of the potential ways that trainers’ idiosyncratic career paths were shaped and contextualised, the role understood and experienced.

A desire, conscious or otherwise, to be involved in a personally-reparative endeavour, was acknowledged by trainers. Jenny and Steve, for instance, talked of their failure to thrive in their own schooling as shaping their desire to be involved in a form of education that developed individual potential. Jenny, Lynne and Teresa all recognised how they had brought a sense of difficulty in relating easily and authentically with others to the role. Frances spoke directly of meeting her currently unfulfilled needs for personal contact. Earlier career choices made, and primary personal and professional identities assumed, seemed significant to how the role was approached and understood. For instance, while both had been teachers, Mary seemed to carry forward her previous identity as a teacher into the role while Peggy connected more with her identity as person-centred counsellor. Moreover, while commonalities could be identified, each trainer worked within a
particular context characterised by particular rewards and challenges. To these particular contexts, trainers brought their own particular histories and ambitions, their individual horizons of understandings (Gadamer, 1979).
6.4 INCORPORATING THE INSIDER VIEW: FOCUSING ABOVE AND BELOW, BETWIXT AND BETWEEN

As Heidegger described it, a project to understand involves both perception and analysis. Such an analysis makes apparent not only the manifest but the latent meanings. As Moran (2002, p.229) articulated: ‘How things appear or are covered up must be explicitly studied’ [my emphasis]. I attempt to bring to this part of the discussion my sense of some of the latent meanings within these findings.

I bring my insider view more consciously into this section. I brought into this research process fore-understandings or preconceptions based on my experiences and understandings. My understanding developed via a circling back and forth between such presuppositions and surprises in the hermeneutic circle (Moran, 2002). I present some such surprises here. Some surprises were connected with the experience of absence and presence. Sartre (1992/1956) believed that things that are absent are as important in defining our experience as the things that are present. He uses the example of arriving to meet someone in a café; his experience of the café is of a café without his companion; his expectation and his companion’s absence are inherent to the experience. Trainers talked a lot, for instance, of an absence of support. The sense of absence I allude to here comes from my expectations, my viewpoint, my shifting fore-understandings. Conversely, I encountered presence where I expected absence. Such experiencing within both the collection and analysis of these accounts contributes to this section of the discussion.

I am inevitably more tentative here. The idea of latent meaning can carry overtones of ‘an understanding of the utterer better than he understands himself’ (Schleiermacher, 1998, p.266). However, I take heart from Smith et al’s (2009) depiction of such analysis as ‘added value’ that the researcher can contribute by having access to an overview of the data and an interaction with the literature. I would add to this the chance of a larger area of ‘negotiated meaning’ (Gadamer, 1979) made possible by my experience as trainer. As Schleiermacher (ibid) argued, the sharing of common human ground and the consequent capacity to utilise personal responses is important to the interpretative process. In this spirit,
the areas for discussion here are offered as potential ‘added value: It is to the reader to decide their utility.

I focus here on certain features of the findings: this is not an attempt at a discussion of the findings in their totality. I focus my attention in two different ways. I initially focus inwards to examine how the interplay between individual motivation, personal character, theoretical understanding and aspects of the role’s character may have significant implications for its experiencing. I then shift my focus outwards as I move to discuss my sense of trainers ‘playing out’ an increasingly complex matrix of divisions within the training field, with such divisions multiplying on the back of internal and external change. I add a sewing analogy. These are the two ‘weft’ threads I weave between, over and under the ‘warp’ of trainer meanings.

6.4.1 The interplay between individual motivation, theoretical base and the character of the role

My first surprise in this study came with the level and quality of the commitment expressed: Frances’s image of self-sacrifice, of Christ on the cross; Peggy’s sense of herself disappearing as she gave herself to others. An on-going level of surprise came with the continuation of such expression of commitment based upon notions such as service to community, social justice, contributing to individual empowerment, and the engendering of wider social change. There is ample evidence of well-developed pro-social identities or ‘the dimension of the self-concept focused on helping and benefiting others’ (Grant et al, 2009, p.321). Some of the trainers might be said to fit the profile of ‘libertarians of the left’ (Pilgrim, 1991, p.54) attracted to humanist therapeutic approaches. Also potentially applicable is Halmos’s (1965) analysis that counselling attracts people who would once have been attracted to clerical or political careers, before secularisation and disillusion with politics set in. The trainer discourse may also reflect counselling’s voluntary roots. Bondi (2004) referred to counsellors in the Scottish voluntary sector talking in ways that suggested continuing connections with counselling’s ‘voluntaristic, mutualist and non-hierarchal roots’ (p.321).
Such vocational commitment could be argued to lead to ‘overcommitment’ in vocational psychology terms. This is factored into the job demand-control-support model and is equated with working too hard on the basis of the desire for approval and esteem (Tsutsumi and Kawakami, 2004). It is generally viewed as maladaptive and enduring (Siegrist, 2002). The term in itself is interesting. It could be argued to pathologise a strong commitment to work which would be more likely to follow if its proper performance is fundamental to self-approval and self-esteem. The perceived significance not of work per se but of this work is dominant throughout these accounts.

Some trainers also explicitly talk of themselves personally as assuming too much responsibility, of possessing an overcommitted attitude. Teresa, for instance, talks of the impact of working with a colleague who shared her work ethic:

Teresa: …we just really overworked and there was still more work to do, there was never an end to the work that you could do. We’d work all day then we’d go home, I’d stay overnight with her and we’d work for hours in the evening.
Liz: You weren’t going to call each other out.
Teresa: Exactly. We were both as obsessed by it… [317-324]

At the same time, this does not take away from the notion of the nature of the work as the motivator - or that the level of demands could indeed have been uncontainable within the working day and week.

Moving forward, I would connect vocational commitment, theoretical understanding and the emotional labour component of the work. Some theoretical orientations place relationship at the centre of therapeutic change and four of the five person-centred trainers placed emphasis on the importance of an authentic giving of self within the role. It was also a strong feature of two of the psychodynamic accounts. The combination of authentic engagement with powerful processes within an often inadequate and unsupportive environment had at times proved overwhelming and in the long term exhausting for some tutors. I
think here particularly, although not exclusively, of Frances, Peggy, Sue and Lynne.

Again, I encountered surprise. I knew that I had experienced deep distress. I knew something of Frances’ and Peggy’s, Andy’s and Steve’s experiencing, although not the depth of feeling that had been engendered for them. I take some understanding from this. One is the tendency to try and keep private the nature of the internal experiencing, to hold it, contain it – as tutors experienced themselves doing with students: *There’s bits of me that I suppose I have to keep contained; I won’t tell that student to fuck off when I want to* [Sue, 249-250]. As I said earlier, I think the language is telling - here are my unacceptable feelings and words. Dave spoke of the role as a lonely one. I had experienced a level of shame about the intensity of my feelings and wonder if this is a potential barrier - the sense that this is about personal pathology. I would echo the words of one participant in McLeod’s 1995 study: ‘because of the individual nature of our work, we … are often guilty of over-personalizing issues which are actually part of our common world’ (p.165). Moreover, as counsellors we are inculcated with the importance of ensuring our disclosures serve the interest of the client. At the same time, the willingness to reveal to me when invited demonstrated the desire to be heard. This was true even where I was a stranger.

Anger was not the only emotion expressed. Lynne and Sue both expressed a sense of feeling worn down by the repetitious nature of criticism over things they were powerless to change. Vulnerability was expressed in terms of openness to attack and criticism by students but also to the possibility of complaint. A sense of feeling unappreciated, of feeling ‘unseen’, of simply feeling hurt was all there in the mix. Such reactions can be framed in terms of the demands of emotional labour, of deep and surface acting. They can also be framed in terms of threat to core elements of the individuals’ self-concept:

‘The essential nature of the threat is that if the experience were accurately symbolized in awareness, the self-concept would no longer be a consistent gestalt, the conditions of worth would be violated, and the need for self-
regard would be frustrated. A state of anxiety would exist’ (Rogers, 1959, p.227).

When a vocational commitment is combined with a commitment to an authentic giving of self, one can argue that trainers may experience negative interactions with students as a threat to their fundamental sense of self. In existential terms, these tutors face a threat to their moral self-affirmation –‘relatively in terms of guilt, absolutely in terms of condemnation’ (Tillich, 1952, p.49). Frances spoke, for instance, of guilt in her recognition that she had hurt students. She talked of acknowledging the grain of truth in how these students are being with me [405-406]. A cognitive recognition of students’ anxiety, of the power of group dynamics, could not always provide sustenance. Tutors could feel attacked on grounds close to key areas of their self-concept – fairness, the desire to empower, theprizing of the individual. If I bring myself consciously to the fore here, it is when I am attacked on grounds of fairness and impartiality that I am most wounded – these values are fundamental to my self-regard.

The assessment and gate-keeping role is also pertinent here. As I have already touched on, a sense of internal conflict between the ‘caring individual’ and ‘responsible professional’ identities can be enacted (Grant et al, 2009: Margolis and Molinsky, 2008). This was identifiable particularly in Lynne’s psychodynamic account. A sense of ambivalence about identification with a ‘responsible professional attitude’ could add to the sense of internal dissonance. This was most evident in Peggy’s person-centred account. Generally, trainers could be argued to inhabit a number of positions. Strong identification with professionalism seemed to be connected with a lack of expressed difficulty with gatekeeping, in fact a positive identification with its importance. This was true of the CBT trainers. Some trainers seemed to sidestep such difficulty by not identifying gatekeeping as part of their role. Steve is an illustration of this in the integrative camp. Others seemed to live with differing levels of ease and dis-ease, especially when institutional policies and procedures were seen to cut against any personal position arrived at.
There are some other important dimensions to assessment that impact. Commonly, judgments on merit are made within systems characterised by ritual and a protective distance between the judges and the judged. The archetype is the judicial system. In other situations, while on-going assessment may form part of the role, the responsibility for summative assessment resides elsewhere. As G.C.E Advanced Level tutor, I assessed students’ work but ultimately they sat an examination on the basis of which they were passed and failed by an independent examination board. In that sense my role was always formative; I was separated from the pain of the ‘necessary evil’.

Such protections largely fall away with the counselling tutor role. Although there are external examiner systems and examination boards as the ultimate arbiters, they are there to ratify or otherwise the decision of the tutor. The counsellor trainer is inevitably involved in both formative and summative assessment. They perform necessary evils in the context of close personal relationships, within which they have played a developmental and supportive role. There is substantial role conflict. Samec (1995) and Speedy (1998b) highlighted the potential distress for students in situations of failure. Samec talked in terms of personal crisis. Speedy (1998b) talked of students feeling as if it was an assessment of self. Moreover, trainers themselves have been students: they can remember the pain they experienced themselves and this can add to the sense of difficulty. Counsellors commonly talk of the ‘inner child’: perhaps it’s not too far-fetched to talk of the trainer’s ‘inner student’. Frances makes a link between the difficulty in knowing she’s caused pain and her own experiences:

I have felt let down unseen or unheard by one or two facilitators, and I’ve found it quite, I found it really really hard, and I found it on one occasion really quite devastating. [488-490]

The potential for guilt, shame and distress (Grant et al, 2009) in such encounters is, I would argue, increased by factors such as the close interpersonal context, the potentially conflicting formative and assessment functions of the trainer’s role, and the character of the trainer’s professional commitment and self-identity. There is moreover, an important extra dimension pointed to in Speedy’s (ibid)
sense of students experiencing the process as assessment of self. On one level that is what is happening. As Wheeler (1996a) commented: ‘whatever system is adopted, subjective impressions and assessments will always feature in the assessment of trainees’ (p.188). One could characterise trainers in her study as feeling constrained by academic systems in their capacity to fail people on personal grounds, and hence as not able to properly fulfil the ‘responsible professional’ element of their identity (Margolis and Molinsky, 2008). Students are encouraged to reveal and explore self in their work. I remember as a student revisiting childhood pains of feeling second class. I got a B. It hurt. Trainee accounts point to their vulnerability also: ‘every time I give myself, I am in the middle of the room, for acceptance or disposal, interest or confusion, liking or disliking’ (Rogers, 2004, pp. 45-6). It is not only trainers who may be experiencing threats to core self. Like the trainers, trainees can be viewed within the lens of boundaryless career theory. They too are pursuing an attempt to build individual careers around notions of employability and personal meaning. Their meaning systems may embrace strong notions of vocational commitment. Failure may imply a threat on all sides.

To return to Jenny’s words: *I see the job of the trainer as being incredibly important because of the job we do* [164-165]. It is important to trainers and important to trainees and it is the nature of the importance attached that can shape not only the rewards but the perceived difficulties. It may also invoke a powerful set of parallel processes of threats to core self with the potential to be played out in academic and professional appeals and complaints systems.

### 6.4.2 The intersections of difference: Otherness

I move to discuss here my sense of trainers ‘playing out’ an increasingly complex matrix of divisions within the training field, with such divisions multiplying both on the back of internal and external change. Again, these tentative understandings emerged out of engagement with the trainer texts, my fore-understandings as a trainer, my experience of the interactions with trainers as well as with the literature. The thread of ‘otherness’ was a strong one throughout the accounts in
terms of the sense of misfit within settings. A sense of a range of ‘othernesses’
also became apparent to me in the course of the research process.

6.4.2.1 CBT as ‘other’

While CBT is depicted as a significant approach to counselling (e.g. McLeod, 2009), it also holds an ambiguous status, often depicted as separate and other and, increasingly, the ‘competition’. As I discussed earlier in the thesis, CBT has
developed a strong research profile and a level of acceptance, for instance within
the health service, that has been seen to jeopardise other approaches’ continued
existence. To use psychological analogies, in Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy the
satisfaction of basic safety needs of counsellors from other approaches is being
jeopardised by its rising profile. Framed in psychodynamic terms, the sense of
threat could be viewed as having unleashed or intensified basic defence
mechanisms of splitting and projection with CBT as the target.

This sense of otherness was evidenced by my surprise at the presence of similarity
in their understandings and experiences. The stereotype that had coloured my
preconceptions is of a formulaic technique-based approach that neglects the
importance of the therapeutic relationship and the individuality of the client. I
heard an emphasis on the individual, on making the model fit the client, not the
client fit the model, on the importance of forming effective relationships and of
taking a critical stance towards evidence. I heard of the criticism of I.A.P.T. as a
formulaic technique-based approach that neglects the importance of relationship
and the individuality of the client. I heard vocational commitment. I heard a
similarity in the lived experience of the setting. I experienced welcome.

I also experienced otherness, for instance, in a greater identification with
professionalism, a greater sense of, to quote my journal:
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…conversing with lecturers – good, highly committed lecturers committed to their students and to egalitarian relationships – but lecturers nevertheless. A different sort of commitment evident – committed to CBT because it works. Something to do with their practitioner background in mental health.

All the CBT trainers acknowledged a sense of being viewed differently. It was only Jack who directly referenced a sense of attack:

She was a psychoanalytical psychotherapist and when we had the regradings she gave me this grade and it said on my job description Cognitive Behavioural Psychotherapist. Her exact words to me were - you don’t have to be a psychotherapist to do your job. You are not a psychotherapist. You are a cognitive behavioural therapist. [540-544]

6.4.2.2 Different schools as ‘other’

The counselling field as a whole has been likened to a faith community (e.g. Halmos, 1967; Pilgrim, 1997). Tucker (1968) argued that secularisation does not mean the disappearance of religion but rather the ‘displacement of religious emotions into other areas’ (p733). Richards (2007) talks of a quasi-religious ethos. Rieff (1987) similarly talks of the psychotherapist as ‘secular spiritual guide’ (p.25). Pilgrim talks of engagement in therapy as potentially reflecting ‘the desire to join or seek the ministrations of a secular priesthood’ (pref: vii). Purton (1991) depicted training as an initiation into a ‘worldview’, a ‘way of being’ (p.47) or ‘becoming one of us’ (p.35), comparable to induction into a quasi-religious faith. The differing schools have been depicted as providing particular insights or ‘the secular equivalent of finding the true light’ (Pilgrim, 1997, pref:vii). The founding figures of differing schools can be painted as charismatic leaders who offer followers ‘not simply and solely their extraordinary selves as instruments of leadership but also a formula or set of formulas for salvation’ (Tucker, 1968, p.751). Tucker’s discussion of the cult of the dead leader has strong overtones in the continuing significance of the words of Rogers, Jung, Freud etcetera.
This is not to deride the importance of faith. Feltham (2010) talks of the importance of faith for the individual counsellor and the danger of its loss. He talks of how it may be lost over time: ‘counselling rests on faith but that faith may diminish in intensity, at least for some’ (p.136). This stands out in the accounts, for instance of Peggy and Frances. In a vocationally-oriented career, perhaps loss of faith and hope becomes an essential component of burn-out.

Whatever the basis, it is argued that fundamental to community is the designation of some people as insiders and others as outsiders (Billington, 1998). The continuing division between schools was evident within the research process. It was reflected in my ease with recruiting integrative and person-centred trainers due to my personal contact with them. As I moved away from my theoretical base, I was meeting strangers. Division was also evident in trainer responses to my question over whether they thought there were particular challenges that stemmed from their theoretical orientation as a trainer. The dominant response was that trainers did not know because they had little or no interaction with trainers from different traditions. Here’s a typical response from Peggy:

*I do think the person-centred approach makes very particular demands on the individual in a way that ....Now I’ve never practised from another orientation so I can’t.... at one level I don’t have the grounds for saying that but, given that , I think the person-centred approach is fairly unique in terms of the ...but I don’t know, you see.* [195-200]

Sue challenges herself here on this very issue:

*I don’t think so. I suppose my fantasy would be that on CBT training that....well, it’d be more a prejudice than a fantasy really would be that somehow while their students are not going to regress and have to go through the same process of personal development. That’s pretty nonsense really isn’t it?* [520-523]
My ‘prejudices’ were made apparent not only in my encounters with CBT trainers but psychodynamic trainers also. What surprised me was the emphasis on authentic engagement on the part of Lynne and Sue. Where was the stereotypical ‘blank sheet’ that in my experience can still dominate person-centred discourse concerning psychodynamic counselling practice? Schoolism was perhaps also evident - alongside a potential alternative explanation - in the response of a colleague to my perception of similarity:

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Commenting to a person-centred trainer that had found a real commitment to relationship on the part of the psychodynamic trainers. Her seeming not to want to accept this, me then not wanting to accept her alternative explanation, that it was perhaps more down to personality styles…

Lynne referred directly to her sense of being a victim of prejudice on the part of person-centred therapists.

6.4.2.3 Divisions within theoretical schools

The diversity of theories underpinning counselling has already been referred to and hence the difficulty in creating homogenous samples for this research. Psychodynamic is an umbrella term that can cover a wide range of particular approaches. Sanders (2004) referred to the different tribes within the person-centred nation. Jenny identified herself with fourth wave CBT while Jack connected himself more with a particular cognitive-behavioural approach. Integrative by definition is characterised by differing theoretical bases.

What was evident from these studies was the existence of further divisions cutting across the existing theoretical ones. Teresa alluded to one - the division between part-time and full-time tutors:

There’s a difference between people who are the core staff and the people who just come in and do a module or something; they don’t get involved in
the complexity and I sometimes think they probably wouldn’t like it if they did. [265-267]

This may connect with how people primarily identify themselves – as counsellors or trainers. Utilising my own experience, my primary identity has shifted alongside my pattern of employment. Another division quite simply is around who is rated highly as a tutor. Again bringing my personal experience to the fore, I have experienced the therapy world as one based around personal connection and knowledge. Jane had a strong sense of tutors she rated and those she did not: Some, some are - if I had a cat I wouldn’t let them counsel them or train them [152]. Teresa talked of her disappointment at times with other tutors: They’ve said to me far too much about their personal lives and what’s going on and have engendered a sort of caretaking from their students [282-283]. West (2009) identified the incestuousness implicit in the practice of training institutes recruiting from their past students. Both Jane and Mary talked of doing this: …we’ve got a trainer to come and work for us a few years back straight off the Diploma because of her experience [Jane, 137-138]; ..unless they’ve come through our courses I don’t find they can operate in the ethos we’re trying to create [Mary, 320-321]. While it can be argued that such practices point to a necessary discernment on the part of trainers, the potential for the formation of cliques, of ‘in’ and ‘out’ groups, of new versions of ‘the old school tie’ network are evident.

Further divisions can be conceptualised as arising from the professionalisation project. As already discussed there were different senses of reconciliation with the professional project amongst the trainers, bringing scope for division within theoretical schools. The variety of settings and the different levels at which training is now offered add scope for further division. As early as 1998, Johns was talking of practitioners from other settings questioning the credentials of university-based training. The potential for intersecting, overlapping and conflicting communities of practice proliferates. I am reminded of the Labour party of which I am a member. The unity of purpose in its formation became fractured in its development and there now exists a ‘broad church’ of differing,
often opposing factions. As with counselling, notions of ideology, meaning and purpose colour the discourse.

Again my insider status is relevant. Interviewing the person-centred trainers brought to the fore the sense of internal divisions based around nature of vocational commitment, status and setting. The interviews provided a space for difference to be aired, however kindly expressed. Peggy expressed her sense of our differing motivations: we both had been teachers but: there was a difference between us, because you were much more ...... I was very much a counselling practitioner wanting to be involved in developing people as counsellors [603-607]. She also moved tentatively to point to my engagement in the academic world, from which she had stepped away: I’m conscious that in saying this I’m being critical of the world that you’re very much a part of, so I don’t - I’m not meaning to be disrespectful in it... [424-427]. Jane, from her place in the independent sector, used pointed humour: I think there are some people who kind of go into training for the wrong reason, like status and money. Sorry, why do you work for that university Liz? [248-250]. Conversely, my sense of ‘other’ was invoked by Diane. Her discourse did not ‘fit’. Was she really person-centred? Had I messed up my sampling? It was my experience within F.E. that helped me make sense of her sense-making, that provided an area of ‘negotiated meaning.

With the psychodynamic trainers, the difference related to setting but also to the professionalisation process. The oft-noted research-practice divide was pointed to here. Mary had the freedom to set up an agency in her own image, and the theoretical base indeed had more of an individual flavour. It also had more of a practice-based flavour and she specifically flagged her non-identification with research. Lynne and Sue, based in universities, not only expressed a stronger theoretical identification but a valuing of research. The CBT trainers threw up other potential divides based around settings. Dave’s dual N.H.S./ university setting seemed to mark him out as facing a particular set of pressures in a very isolated situation. One interview alerted me to another perceived divide – that of old and new universities. I recorded my sense of initial discomfort in my journal:
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Welcome felt non-existent – left me wondering how students must feel coming into a crowded staffroom and feeling virtually ignored. Left me feeling difficult and uncertain.

I am reminded here of Wittgenstein’s (1953) notion of language games. He saw two principles underpinning such games. One is of speech as fight and play; the other is speech as the creation of social bonds. I felt as if the interview began with fight and play. As a member of a high-status old university, I experienced being put in my place by a member of a new, lower status university while simultaneously being reminded of their educational pedigree:

*I think that you can do it anywhere, because I think the top rank... I mean I’ve been to good universities to redbricks and news, so I’ve been to A and B and C and D and somewhere else I can’t even think of, and A was very good, B I don’t think was a lot better than here, really.*

6.4.2.4 Lack of common cause with other occupational groups

What is lacking in these accounts is any sense of common cause with staff in the wider setting or other occupational groups. Again, my insider status feels relevant here - it took me a time to notice its absence – its absence is the norm in my experience of training. I only have space here to observe this and postulate some potential explanations.

One is the general critique that counselling encourages an inward focus and thus works against looking outwards to seek common cause. There is a developed critique of both psychotherapy and counselling as inherently individualising, psychologising, and de-politicising (e.g. Pilgrim, 1991, 1992, 1997; Masson, 1988, 1992; Smail, 1993; Kearney, 1996; Proctor, 2002). There have been calls for the therapy world to more adequately address the interface between this individualistic orientation and counselling’s socio-political context (e.g. Samuels, 1993, 2001; Feltham, 2003; Sanders, 2006). One can add to this, perhaps, a
chosen marginalisation in communities of practice terms. This is a critique of adult education generally of which counsellor training can be viewed as part. Adult education has been argued to keep its distance from university culture (Usher et al, 1997) with ‘liberal adult education tradition’ thus denying itself ‘effective dialogue with the universities over any wider re-definition of university mission’ (Duke, 1992, p.5) Add to this the effects of the professional project which Abbott (1988) argues brings in its wake competitive battles for jurisdiction. This can be argued to be particularly salient in the area of the so-called semi-professions, undermined by their connections with femininity and everyday lay activity (e.g. Acker, 1989; Abbott and Wallace, 1998). This is true not only of counselling but also of nursing, teaching and social work. Whilst it would make sense for us all to ally together, there are powerful reasons not to do so. We are competing for jurisdiction within the same territory. We draw the line: they use counselling skills; we counsel. They are other. Add to this the sense that some counsellors believe themselves involved in something countercultural. As Rogers (1980) said, it is ‘a way of being’.
6.5 A FINAL PULLING TOGETHER OF THE THREADS

I would like to take forward the following points into the concluding chapter. These can be viewed as the overall, tentatively-constructed and offered ‘super-superordinate’ themes:

- **Similarity and divergence in the understandings of the role**
  While certain ingredients were common across the differing approaches, there was a discernible difference of emphasis in the understanding of the role between the different studies. The strongest contrast was between the CBT and person-centred accounts. Areas of difference focused on the nature and significance of the relationships with students, the place of critical thinking and the importance of evidence-based practice.

- **The experience of high levels of stress and burnout**
  High levels of stress were evident across the accounts connected with workload pressures, the emotional demands of the role and the inadequacy of settings in providing a supportive environment. Stress translated commonly into a sense of burnout, with half of the trainers exhibiting identifiable symptoms.

- **The experience of high levels of reward**
  A vocational commitment was important to this sense of reward, a sense of doing something valuable and important, combined with the personal development and satisfaction gained from meeting the demands of the role, particularly related to student development.

- **The dynamic intersection of rewards and stress across time and within the individual experience**
  Tutors experience of the role’s rewards and challenges shifted over time both in the short and longer term, and individuals differed in the balance of reward and personal cost that they perceived. A vocational commitment could simultaneously be the basis for reward, stress and burnout given the intense and potentially conflicting nature of the responsibilities connected with the role.
• The importance of context
Individual understanding and experience of the role needs to be set within the context of trainers’ personal and professional histories and the particularities of their settings. Speaking generally, trainers in the independent sector reported substantially less stress and a significant sense of reward, while the shifting professional, educational and economic contexts were adding new senses of threat and uncertainty across all sectors.

• The importance of otherness
The new pressures as well as the processes of ‘professional’ maturation are potentially causing new schisms both within and between different approaches. A sense of otherness connected with the nature of vocational commitment seems an important component, along with the increased stratification of the sector along power and status lines.
CHAPTER 7 FINAL DISCUSSION, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

In this final chapter, I contribute some additional discussion of my role in the research process. I examine my lived experience of the research process, my sense of the boundaries of this study, of how my decisions have led to the inclusion and exclusion of data and analysis, and my sense of the study’s quality and utility and ‘contribution to knowledge’. I summarise the findings and conclude with some potential implications.

7.1 FINAL DISCUSSION

7.1.1 The relationship between the researcher and the research process

*The existentialist stresses knowledge by participation,*  
the empiricist knowledge by observation  
Macquarrie, 1972, p.12

In this section I wish to discuss the relationship between the researcher and the research from a number of viewpoints. I turn to discuss more fully my sense of how I engaged with the worlds of the participating trainers, to focus on the nature of our encounter both face-to-face within the interviews and subsequently in the analysis of the transcribed texts. I explore my sense of the depth and intricacies of the engagement, its dynamic and interactive, reciprocal nature.

7.1.1.1 Fore-understandings

I discussed in chapter one how I brought into the research process my sense of the difficulty of the trainer role. This fore-understanding was not an intellectually acquired one, but one acquired through powerful situated, experiential learning. Less to the forefront were the role’s joys and satisfactions which also formed part of my lived experience. I had, like Stokes (1998, p.130) initially experienced training as ‘a little like falling in love’: some of my subsequent experiences had felt a little like falling out of love.
I chose the extract from Edna St Vincent Millay’s poem (1920) to illustrate the demands of emotional labour (see section 6.2.5.2). I have also used it elsewhere to illustrate my personal sense of the role’s intensity (Ballinger, 2008b).

My candle burns at both ends;
It will not last the night;
But ah, my foes, and oh, my friends –
It gives a lovely light!

I can on reflection unpick how the words spoke to both sides of my experience - of burning bright and melting down. The term ‘friends and foes’ also resonated. I had, to use psychodynamic concepts, felt the impact of both positive and negative projections from students. I had experienced the ‘integrated wholeness’ of meaningful work as described by Chalofsky (2003) but what dominated my immediate experience was the emotional exhaustion and sense of reduced competence associated with burnout (Maslach, 1986; Maslach and Jackson, 1981, 1993).

My foreunderstandings shifted and developed as I engaged with the research process but also as I continued to live my life as a trainer. Moreover my experiences as a trainer were being impacted on by the research process, both negatively and positively. Here is an extract from my journal:

21 April 2008.
Me as trainer - feeling overstretched, thin, not able to stay in the moment with groups. Talking too much, ‘over-performing’. Doing this research part of this thinness. Ironic. Also the research starting to come into the content of the training. Questions over who or what gives us the authority to be a trainer or counsellor - me posing this to the supervision group and starting a really fruitful discussion.

The roles of researcher and trainer were hence intertwined. My supervisor continued to advise me that my training experiences constituted ‘rich data’, but
how to utilise them to enrich the research? Etherington (2004) describes the importance of knowing and processing our personal history in a way that allows us empathic resonance rather than ‘over-identification, which might lead us to over-involvement and biases that are out of our control’ (p.180). This points to the need to both engage with our experiences in order to resonate but also to bracket or set apart those that intrude too loudly. Sometimes my current experiencing was too loud to set aside and I needed to take time out from the research process. I went in and out of active involvement in the research process, engaging, disengaging and re-engaging as timely and appropriate. I also took care, when ready, to consciously engage with all aspects of my experience past and present - the fun, the laughter, the empowerment, the loving, the sharing, the ‘feeling great’ alongside the boredom, exasperation, loneliness, vulnerability, the sense of being ‘not good-enough’. All of these experiences and more could be part of research participants’ experience and understanding and hence needed to be accessible. Importantly I connected with my not-knowingness about what the role entailed and, as in the counselling process, the need to stay with that uncertainty, to be open to surprise.

7.1.1.2 Interviewing

Interviewing is an act of participation. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p.101) talk of the ‘emotional dynamics of an interview journey’. Their emphasis is the researcher’s emotional relationship with the interview project, with which I can identify. What I want to elucidate here is my sense of the multifaceted and contextualised nature of the interview process itself.

In terms of contextualisation, the significance of my researcher-trainer profile was writ large. I experienced both myself and the trainers interacting primarily with and, in my case, from my trainer identity. I was trainer-researcher rather than researcher-trainer and this patterned the interviews. As discussed earlier in the thesis, my identity as a trainer was known to all the trainers involved. Some had long-established relationships with me; some were of newer acquaintance; some I was meeting for the first time. I had professional connections with a number of the trainers, bringing in issues of dual roles, power and status. Moreover, I have
experienced competitiveness between differing training providers. I am associated with a high-status ‘old’ university. I was able to catch some sense of the power dynamics, for instance, around my university setting and around prior professional relationships. I captured, especially with some person-centred and integrative trainers, a sense of assumed shared understandings. Overall, however, what remains elusive is how such factors impacted in their entirety on our co-constructive process.

I can pick out points when I consciously brought to the fore my trainer identity. I at times deliberately brought my evolving personal understandings into the interviewing process as an equaliser and a permission-giver - just as I do in training. Here is an example from my interview with Jenny, where I talk about a personal insight sparked off by an earlier interview:

...as a non-trainer I can have a level of self-consciousness that really I can feel quite inhibits me and reduces me. But because I need to put it to one side to be a trainer - that can be lovely liberating. I can do things that actually I wouldn’t in my life outside ....... Does that make sense? [1149-1160]

I notice I invited Jenny to make sense of my making sense, enter the area of negotiated meaning as trainers together. I also am aware of how my evolving understanding could not only lead me to shift my questioning but at times be more challenging. This could be portrayed as trying to widen the area of negotiated meaning. This, again, reflects me as tutor. Here I am, pushing Lynne on her use of the term facilitation: You know, I’m going to push that one. That’s what everybody says and it’s only as I start to analyse it and I’m thinking what .... do they mean? [381-383]. It also reflects me having gone away from previous interviews and realising that I didn’t really understand what the term meant. It has become a non-examined part of everyday trainer discourse.

Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) talk of interviewing in ways that replicate my experience, of how the personal contact and new insights provoked make for an
exciting and enriching experience. I find the existential notion of differing levels of encounter helpful in explaining my sense of the quality of the meeting. Van Deurzen (e.g. 2012) talks of encounter occurring at physical, social, psychological and spiritual levels. Inherent to encounter at any level, but perhaps most particularly at the fourth, is intersubjectivity or the ‘shared, overlapping and relational nature of our engagement with the world’ (Smith et al, 2009, p.17). It is such intersubjectivity that allows empathic resonance but also brings the challenge of discerning ‘where do I end and the other start?’ This extract from my journal captures not only the aliveness of the process for both participants, its emotional as well as cognitive nature, but also points to my questioning. What belongs to me; what belongs to the other; where do we meet and divide?

12. April 2008
Peggy phoned. Talked of how useful it had been for her to be interviewed – it brought clarity about what she values and where she wants to go. She remarked on how I seemed to be becoming alive in the research process – by doing it. Felt really true – am actively chewing over what was said, clarifying where I am, where what people said touched me, where it didn’t. Acknowledging my responses to people’s judgments. Amazed at some people’s clarity over their roles and aware of my judgments re this.

7.1.1. 3 Analysis

Throughout the discussion of the findings I have attempted to make clear their co-constructed nature. However, as with the interviewing process, there is a danger of conveying it solely as a conscious, cognitive process. I would depict it more as a way of being. The trainers seemed to take over my life for a while; they were in my daily thoughts; they entered my dreams; I cared for and about them. While I had only entered their life for a short time, their presence in my life was prolonged and profound. Etherington (2004) captures this well for me:

‘I catch a moment in the lives of others. I ponder on it and respond to it. Meanwhile their lives have moved on in a thousand different ways. Yet for
me the fleeting moment has become a kind of aeon, and I am changed in some way’ (p.230)

The process had strong heuristic overtones. It involved ‘connectedness and relationship’ rather than ‘a kind of detachment’ (Douglass and Moustakas, 1985, p.43). At the same time, it was about achieving empathic resonance rather than ‘over-identification’, ‘overinvolvement’ and ‘biases that are out of our control’ (Etherington, ibid). It involved maintaining the wholeness and the individuality of experience, alongside establishing commonalities and differences and coming up with themes directly traceable back to the words of the trainers. It entailed immersing myself in the minutiae of the accounts, in the individual words and phrases and phrasing, in worrying away at the nuances of meaning in the detail and the account and accounts as a whole.

At the same time, I needed to maintain a reflexive awareness of the process in which I was engaged, to look back on myself. To illustrate, I add another extract from my journal here related to my analysis of Sue’s account.

30 November 2011
Real sense of the job as emotional labour, of needing to find ways of expressing herself professionally, manage her emotional responses.
Creativity a central metaphor – trainer – musician – gardener.

10 December 2011
This time I’m getting much more the sense of the pressure she has felt under – the wearing away. And feeling pissed off, put on. (Parallels me at the moment – feeling really pressured this week, put on, undervalued by some colleagues and basically rather pissed off – doesn’t sound coincidental)

This points to another avenue for immersion – in myself. While any analysis needed to be rooted in the texts, I needed to find a way of making sense of the trainers’ sense-making: the double hermeneutic needed my engagement with my sense-making processes. I needed to continually revisit my interpretations, look at
them from differing viewpoints, question, criticise, synthesise. I needed to be prepared to access my own experiences as a potential avenue to understanding and to potentially put aside as a barrier. I needed to access, if not a god’s eye view, at least one from above, beyond or behind.

While ‘worrying away’ could describe much of this activity, sometimes it was important and more productive to ‘let be’. A number of activities proved facilitative. One was taking long walks with my dog along the country paths near my home, letting my mind wander around the texts, playing with potential connections. Another was sleeping. I would go to sleep full of thoughts and questions and somehow I would wake with a potential theme. I learnt to catch it quickly before it disappeared in the activity of my day. Sense-making could result, importantly, from contact with others. I would not only process as I spoke but as I listened to myself speak. Listening to and, importantly dialoguing with others was crucial.

Such processes illustrate the holistic nature of the analytic process. As I have ruminated on this, an extract from a remembered song has come to me which captures my sense of some the dynamics of the process. It links to my experience of the turning around and turning over, the circling and spiralling, the visiting and revisiting, the potential ‘never-endingness’ of it all:

Round, like a circle in a spiral,
like a wheel within a wheel,
never ending or beginning,
on an ever spinning reel.

Bergman and Bergman, The Windmills of My Mind, 1968

7.1.1.4. Writing up

As I have discussed, my trainer and researcher selves have been enmeshed in this research process. I have as a trainer, indeed, collected rich data. One response has
been to become much more measured in the extent to which I reveal myself within my training role. I have become more aware of the need to balance self-revelation with self-protection. However, a tension remains. I know that my openness is valued by students and helps me to form effective relationships. I know that I consciously attempt to model openness as a tutor. I carried the same tension into the writing of this thesis. As with training, I have attempted to balance these potentially conflicting responsibilities, that of paying respect for privacy, my own and the participating trainers’, while providing a level of transparency sufficient to ensure the trustworthiness of this research. This has at times felt a difficult balancing act and one that posed an emotional as much as cognitive challenge.

I also carried another tension, that of balancing my voice alongside those of my fellow trainers. I have talked of the difficulty at times of taking responsibility for authorship of this piece of research. My sense of difficulty stemmed from a concern that I might let my meaning-making processes dominate, from my desire to ensure that the trainers’ voices were the loudest, not mine. I felt the tension most strongly as I moved towards the hermeneutics of questioning. Was I moving into either the conceit of knowing the ‘utterer better than he understands himself’ (Schleiermacher, 1998, p.266) or the disrespectful act of imposing my own meaning or indeed the meanings of others onto the individual trainer’s experience? The way I have attempted to deepen the analysis by incorporating a more sociological than psychological approach at points reflects my belief in therapy’s ‘social blinkers’ (Pilgrim, 1991).

I cannot write off such questioning. As a colleague said, the thesis is about demonstrating mastery (private conversation). I am encouraged by my supervisor to find my voice. Smith (2011) talks of a good paper as characterised by strong analysis as well as data. While I cannot avoid authorship of the analysis, it is offered rather than imposed. I reiterate the significance of the double hermeneutic – ‘the end result is always an account of how the analyst thinks the participant is thinking’ (Smith et al, 2009, p.80). My conclusions are offered as hypothetical and suggestive rather than categoric or definitive. I have tried to remain tentative in my analysis. I have attempted to make clear some of the ‘multiple voices, past
and present’ that make up my ‘dialogic space’ (Dimitriadis and Kamberelis, 2006, p.51). At the same time, I have tried to find a way of representing effectively these trainers’ voices; to not let my tentativeness and desire to protect their privacy obscure the clarity of their representation. I may have power potentially to misuse my position but I also hold responsibility.

The writing up of this research process, thus, has felt like a series of difficult balancing acts. My sense of responsibility has been added to by my awareness that its form and structure are my creation. My capacity to properly (in my terms) represent trainers’ voices, I knew, was dependent upon my ability to effectively communicate. I quote here from a student’s piece of work:

‘I went to a comedy night. Listening to the comedian, it occurred to me that the heuristic process was rather like the comedian’s process. He (for it begins with the comedian) observes some absurdity in life, out there, he catches it, creates the story and delivers the punch-line. The comedian’s retelling, made colourful and full with his own life experience, speaks to something we all recognise, and we laugh’ (Alison Gosling, 2012).

This captures for me the project here – to write in a manner that captured and communicated the trainers’ experiences in a manner that speaks to the reader. I knew my style of delivery would and could not suit all. This thesis is the sum of my attempts to negotiate the balancing acts I have discussed, and to communicate the research findings in an accessible and meaningful manner within the constraints of the norms of academic presentation.

7.1.1.5 Rewards gained

This leads me into a final exploration of how this research has impacted on me as a practitioner. As Stiles (1999) argued, one of the measures of a research study’s trustworthiness is its reflexive validity. Was the researcher changed? Did their understanding demonstrate permeability? Yardley (2000) included the notion of impact and importance, of assessing the research in terms of its theoretical and
practical significance. I would bring that back to the personal – are there signs of the research impacting on my understanding and practice?

The answer, simply, is yes. The interaction between the research and my understanding is woven throughout my research journal. I experience myself going through a process of deconstruction and reconstruction that parallels my sense of what happens to counsellors in training. My journal is full of self-questioning but also a sense of the formation of an increasingly solid base of understanding of my experiences within the role. I look inwards and outwards. I am gaining a better sense of myself as a ‘situated being’. Different aspects chime at differing times. There is, though, a sense of a snowballing process as understandings gained become fore-understandings taken forward. I start, for instance, to look at myself and training in lifespan terms, a way of looking at grows as I compare and contrast myself with the trainers. I hear myself not only looking outwards but inwards. I hear the hermeneutics of questioning applied to myself:

24 October 2011
Real sense of lifespan issues in some accounts. Links with my sense of change in me. At first enthusiastic, scared, excited, cast low, brought up high. Now not wanting either. Wanting to be seen as ‘good enough’, competent, doing my job. And recognising that I was getting my esteem needs met but at a cost – an external locus of evaluation – easily cast high and low. And also, yes, enjoying a sense of power and status – or at least importance. Actually, yes, importance. But not wanting the accompanying responsibility…

As I disclosed in the methods section, I had started the research study with an overwhelming sense of the role’s difficulty. I now have a stronger sense of meaning that I can attach to this sense of its difficulties that can help hold and contain me. This has been a rich learning experience. I have been asked if it was a therapeutic experience. I answered in the affirmative at the time if I remember correctly but on reflection now I am not sure. The answer, I think, is it depends on what we mean by therapy. If therapy is viewed as transformative, I am not
transformed. If therapy is about healing, I am not healed. If therapy concerns more effective self-management twinned with a more informed understanding of my experiencing of the role, I feel this true for me. I am content with such a change.

7.1. 2 A critique of the research

I would here like to attempt an assessment of the quality and qualities of this research project. This is difficult: I have acknowledged my ‘in-ness’. Its overall quality ultimately is not mine to measure. As I explored in chapter 4, it is the reader who is best placed to assess how well I have met Stiles’s (1999) criteria of ‘coherence’ and ‘uncovering; self-evidence’, how well this thesis evidences good practice criteria. My thoughts are offered therefore within this context. I would like to discuss my sense of the consequences of decisions I took at the start and throughout the research process, my growing sense of some discomfort with the approach itself, and the limits and limitations of its representative form. I present these in no particular order.

7.1.2.2 The limits of the methodological approach

I brought an intellectual understanding of the qualities of the approach to this project. I gained a richer and more critical understanding via the experiential learning process of research. On the plus side, the closeness of engagement with the individual texts does indeed provide a richness of data. The lack of attempt to impose a theoretical structure, the impetus to embrace the specific rather than the general, the individual rather than the host feels absolutely relevant to any project to explore human subjective experience. I did indeed feel that I got to ‘know’ Peggy, Teresa, Jane, Diane, Frances, Sue, Lynne, Mary, Laura, Frank, Steve, Andy, Dave, Jack, Sophie and Jenny. I feel the approach does indeed help retain the individual emphasis, provide a picture of diversity and difference. While I would not agree that it produces live ‘videos’ (Smith et al, 2009) I would argue that it produces pictures with depth and colour rather than sketches in black and white.
On the minus side, it provides an abundance of data too substantial to contain - hence the exhortation to commit butchery. There is an inherent contradiction which I lived out on more than one level – that of the need to impose pattern on a plethora of experiencing. However differently presented, there is something of the nomothetic within the approach in the construction of tables of superordinate themes. Contrarily, I am in danger of losing the individual in a deconstructive process as I dissect their experiencing into different categories. I return to my metaphor of butchery. I expressed my sense of killing the live animal in its dissection. I would add to this the sense of losing the live animal within the herd. I think this is an unresolved tension within the approach demonstrable in the research findings.

I think the choice of the approach, while opening up a richness of data, inevitably excluded others. I.P.A. has been criticised as focused on cognition (e.g. Willig, 2008; Langridge, 2007), as straying too far from its phenomenological roots which emphasise the pre-reflective, the ‘vague feelings, pleasures, tastes, hunches, moods and ideas on the margin of consciousness’ (O’Connor and Hallam, 2000, p.245). This is a potential criticism of a range of qualitative methodological approaches. Schön (1987) talked of the difficulties of articulating reflection-in-action, a ‘process we can deliver without being able to say what we are doing’ (p.31). I would argue that autoethnographic and heuristic approaches would have more ably allowed such expression, with their focus on a lived, multihued immersion in the research focus and the use of creative means of expression such as art and poetry. To return to my misquotation of Stevie Smith, there was a cost to me ‘waving not drowning’.

This links to what I would argue are the approach’s interpretative limits. Reflecting its roots in psychology, the emphasis remains on psychological processes. This makes it attractive, for instance, to nursing, an area of growing I.P.A. interest. An understanding of how pain is experienced can have significant implications for service provision (Smith and Osborn, 2007). This makes a homogenous sample appropriate – the emphasis is on the experience. The danger is the loss of significant contextualisation. To contradict what I have just stated, I think this significant to all areas of experience. I would argue that my mother’s
upbringing within a stoic tradition would not only impact on her expression of pain but on its experiencing. Larkin et al (2006) argued for the adoption of contextualism to reflect Heidegger’s recognition that things exist but are given meaning within the context of human life. As such, discussion of the wider context seems absolutely pertinent to me, incorporating a more sociological discussion of the interplay between the individual and wider society. This is largely lacking in I.P.A. papers. This research project incorporated such a project but that brought its own tensions and limitations which I shall touch on in the following section.

I have a number of further comments to make. One concerns some confusing lack of clarity within the approach. Despite the concern with the idiographic, there is a substantial divergence in sample size applied. Smith’s (2011) quality guidelines acknowledge such diversity. He puts forward four quality criteria: a clear subscription to I.P.A.’s theoretical underpinnings; a transparency of method; the coherence, plausibility and interest of the analysis; a sufficient use of participant material to show density of evidence for each theme. For a smaller study (three or fewer cases) an ‘acceptable’ paper should include extracts from all participants in each theme. Within a larger study (eight plus) a paper should either include extracts from at least three participants for each theme plus a sample measure of prevalence or extracts from half the sample in each theme. However, in terms redolent of university assessment systems, Smith introduces the possibility of compensation. The evidence base and interest factors can be considered together and, for instance, a paper high on interest factors may compensate for a less than ideal base. Such criteria confuse more than enlighten. Similarly, as identified by Willig (2008), while I.P.A. recognises the importance of researcher reflexivity, it does not really theorise how it should either be incorporated or displayed. She points to a consequent tendency, reminiscent of grounded theory, to describe themes as ‘emerging’ rather than being constructed.

Conversely and perhaps in contradiction, I have become more critical of the increasingly rule-bound nature of the approach, which sits alongside the continuing rhetoric of there being ‘no clear right or wrong way of conducting this
sort of analysis’ (Smith et al, 2009, p.80). Smith’s 2011 paper is an example of this.

7.1.2.3 The boundaries of this I.P.A. study

In I.P.A. terms, my project was ambitious. I undertook to conduct four studies comprising a total of sixteen cases. While staying away from specific recommendations for PhD study due to its inherent flexibility, Smith et al (2009) talk of perhaps three self-contained but related studies - one potentially a single case study, another containing, say, three cases and yet another containing potentially eight. As they say, it is important not equate a higher number with greater quality. I not only went for four studies, I also went for an ambitious level of analysis. I wanted to explore both what trainers understood their role to be and how they experienced the undertaking of that role. Moreover, as argued earlier, I believe a discussion of the wider context is relevant to an exploration of human existence. Very importantly here, the focus was on the understanding and experiencing of a role that is inherently interpersonal and contextualised, surrounded by a wide and shifting population of students, managers, colleagues, institutional settings, professional bodies and so forth. I also was attempting to construct homogenous samples within an inherently heterogeneous field of practitioners. Part of the research process has been about getting in touch with the divergent nature of the field. I particularly wished to hear the viewpoint of the ‘other’, CBT, and to cross the divides of schoolism (Clarkson, 1998).

Such a project, I believe, had rewards and costs. It allowed me to gain some sense of the similarities as well as differences across different approaches. It allowed me to be simultaneously insider and outsider as I crossed the internal divides and to situate dynamics between and within schools within a wider context. It allowed a greater sociological emphasis than is perhaps common in I.P.A. papers. Trying to cover such breadth, however, led to some loss of analytic depth. One of the pluses of an idiographic approach is that it allows the researcher to develop multilayered interpretations by repeated returns to the data (Camic et al, 2003). The number of returns to the data was inevitably curtailed. In the final section of this chapter I
indicate some of the areas of exploration opened up within the inquiry process but which I had insufficient scope to follow.

I add another important rider. Despite my wish to contextualise trainers’ experiences, ethical decision-making curtailed the specificity of such contextualisation. Trainers have a public profile and I carried the obligation to anonymise. What is missing from this thesis is some of the contextual material that would have illuminated the individual journeys and, I believe, added to our understandings. I missed details which to me seemed significant but important not to relay as they might help identify. Frank more than once asked in the interview ‘this is confidential, isn’t it?’ I talked of the irony of placing reflexivity central to this study while simultaneously recognising my inability to be fully reflexive. I would add the irony of stressing the importance of contextualisation while simultaneously consciously limiting the particularity of the contextualisation of the individual trainer experience.

7.1.3 The generalisability and transferability of the findings

This study, although ambitious for I.P.A., was a small-scale one. Even if I believed it possible, the findings cannot be accorded the status of generalisable truths. I have researched the experience of sixteen individuals within a complex, multifaceted training sector. These accounts emerged out of a particular type of encounter between particular individuals at particular times and in particular places. The nature of the encounter was deeply contextualised and hence also the findings. If I use the term truth, although the desire to be truthful, to ‘think without assent’ (Rieff, 1987, p.13) has guided me throughout, any such truths found (or, rather, constructed) need to be viewed in this light.

This might lead people to reject such findings as meaningless. I think that as soon as you move away from the possibility of a ‘god’s eye view’ there is always such a danger. Tillich (1952) talked of the twentieth century as that of the ‘empty man’, secularisation removing both his god and his meaning. Individuals, however,
continue to construct meanings and a greater understanding is built by collecting these meanings together. This is one contribution to such a mosaic of meaning.

Moreover, I would refer here to the potential importance of the case study in the construction of contextualised knowledge. As Flyvbjerg (2001, 2006) argues, social science has failed to produce general context-independent theory and ‘in the final instance can only offer concrete context-dependent knowledge’ (2006, p.223). He argues that case studies are especially well placed to provide such knowledge which is viewed as central to the development of professional practice. He argues for a model of professional education based on case method, other experiential methods and a significant amount of practical experience. Here are sixteen such cases as starting-points.

Ultimately, however, the reader is central to any assessment of the transferability of the findings (Smith et al, 2009). One important measure of its relevance is its resonance with the reader, whether it is experienced as transferable, whether it speaks to experience, whether it ‘adds’. It may be my place here to argue its relevance, but ultimately it is not my place to judge.
This research highlighted the multifaceted and demanding nature of the training role. Pressures were perceived as stemming from the role’s inherently relational nature, the need to perform a variety of functions and manage a weight and complexity of demands, the requirement to work within potentially adverse and shifting environments, and to fulfil the role’s difficult professional gatekeeping aspects. The central focus and satisfaction for trainers was the development of students as effective practitioners and as such trainers viewed themselves as part of a socially significant project. While there was an evident commonality of understanding of the role, there were some discernible differences in emphases across the differing approaches. The areas of difference focused primarily on the character and importance of relationships with students and the centrality accorded to critical thinking and the evidence-base. CBT trainers placed greater emphasis on the development of critical thinking and evidence-based practice as fundamental to the development of effective practitioners. In the psychodynamic and person-centred accounts, there was more emphasis on the centrality of relationship to the personal development and change that was seen as fundamental to practitioner development. There were different levels of identification and reconciliation expressed with the ‘professional project’, the greatest ease evident in the CBT accounts with the picture more varied in the psychodynamic and integrative accounts. The greatest contrast was between the CBT and person-centred trainers.

It is apparent that, whatever the theoretical approach, carrying out the trainer role in the current British context leaves trainers vulnerable to substantial levels of stress and a developed potential for burnout. Workload pressures, the emotional demands of the role, a limited sense of autonomy and a perceived lack of appropriate support were among some of the major factors cited. Half of the trainers reported symptoms identifiable as burnout. However, alongside this cost sat the high level of the role’s perceived rewards and a substantial commitment to its proper undertaking. The role was experienced as a meaningful one. Trainers voiced a strong level of vocational commitment and a substantial sense of reward derived from involvement with such a personally and socially significant activity.
The role was not only significant for its valued outcome. There was an expressed sense of the personal development caused by, and satisfaction gained from meeting the demands of the role, particularly related to student development. The experience of the role’s rewards and challenges, however, was a dynamic one, shifting in terms of their balance and intensity as work conditions altered in the long or short term or as individual trainers reassessed their commitment and priorities in the long and shorter term. Part of this temporal context was the impact of trainers’ prior work experience. Trainers’ understanding and experiencing of the role needs to be contextualised within their individual personal and professional histories. For some, the role was identified with a substantial improvement in their job satisfaction. Moreover, there were individual differences in the balance of reward and stressful challenge they perceived. A vocational commitment could simultaneously be the basis for reward, stress and burnout given the intense and potentially conflicting nature of the responsibilities connected with the role.

The context of the work carried substantial significance. Trainers’ experiences need to be contextualised within the particularities of their individual work settings. Trainers in the private sector reported substantially less stress and a significant sense of reward connected largely with their greater sense of autonomy. On a wider note, the shifting professional, educational and economic contexts were adding new senses of threat and uncertainty and leading some trainers to question their vocational commitment. There was a sense in the accounts of new pressures combining with the processes of ‘professional’ maturation to cause new schisms and/or expose existing ones both within and between different schools. This seemed connected with the nature of vocational commitment and the increased stratification of the sector along power and status lines. There also was an absence of common cause with other occupational groups in related areas. There was not only a sense of different approaches as ‘other’ but one of otherness or non-belonging within institutional contexts.
7.3 IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH / CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

Training is of crucial significance to counselling practice. Trainers fulfil a variety of functions and carry a weight of responsibility, not least the carrying-out of the professional gatekeeper role. It is a substantial and important role. It was my perception of its difficulty that initiated this research project; it is to the difficulty and significance of the role that I return. The literature review highlighted the paucity of research interest in this area. This research showed the developed level of commitment of trainers to the role and the substantial rewards they took from it. However, it also demonstrated the high tally in terms of potential stress and risk of burnout. This experiencing of stress and burnout is my major, although not exclusive, focus in this section. I also wish to address the continued sense of misfit within the higher educational setting, the continuing divisions within the counselling field as well as the lack of a sense of common interest within other educational and occupational sectors.

I wish to signal the positioning of my voice in this section. This final part of the thesis above all others represents the conclusions I have come to from my making sense of the trainers’ sense-making, from the undertaking of all aspects of this research study and from the sense I have made of my training experiences. It could be depicted as representing a triple hermeneutic or indeed the point I have reached in a hermeneutic spiral.

1. Implications for Higher Education Institutions

Higher Education in Britain has experienced significant change in the last three decades. Such transformation has been qualitative as well as quantitative in nature (Becher and Trowler, 2001). In this period, to utilise Trow’s (1970) measures, it has shifted from an elite to a mass system of education. This has involved not only a shift in the size and composition of the student body but that of its staff. Academic staff are now more likely to have come from professions outside academia and to be involved in programmes and disciplines not previously viewed as the domain of higher education, in particular vocational areas (Becher
and Trowler, ibid). Alongside this, government policy has shifted towards an emphasis on H.E.’s vocational function and a cultural shift has resulted from the imposition of market principles within the sector. Economic capital has come to dominate academic capital in the measure of its value (Bourdieu, 1988).

Counsellor training’s entry into higher education can be contextualised within this process and this research study helps illustrate how the new entrants may carry a continuing sense of feeling misunderstood and, importantly, a lack of welcome. One reaction to the changes has been for some academics to hold on to elitist values and practices from the past (Henkel, 1997). Moreover, status distinctions remain. Becher and Trowler (ibid) identify four domains of subject knowledge (hard pure, soft pure, hard applied and soft applied) which attract differing levels of power and status. Counselling, along with a number of other ‘new entrants’, can be positioned in the lowest status ‘soft-applied’ category, characterised by the ‘enhancement of [semi-] professional practice’ (Becher and Trowler, ibid, p.36). As such, its contribution may not be highly valued by either management or fellow academics and indeed, privately or publically, viewed as contributing to a general ‘dumbing-down’ of the system or the lowering of academic capital. Its position may become more precarious when, or if, it is perceived as producing insufficient economic capital to justify its presence.

Strong counter-arguments can be mounted, pointing to the new entrants’ potential contribution to both economic and academic capital, to their significance to the construction of a mass educational system that both responds to the diversity of knowledge needs of the community and more effectively reflects the diversity of its social, cultural and economic composition. This study demonstrates the high level of commitment of counsellor trainers, the quality of their reflexivity, application and integrity, as well as the diversity of professional experience they bring to the sector. It also highlights the adverse circumstances under which they often operate and the failure of universities to adequately recognise and respond to their particular needs. This study needs to be placed alongside the growing body of research evidence concerning the experience of other newcomers such as nurse trainers. Such an exercise would help to inform the development of effective managerial policies that not only assure that the particular needs of such
programmes and their staff are adequately addressed, but that their contribution is effectively valued and protected.

2. Implications for the Counselling Field

My arguments here focus on the importance of new initiatives to help support and develop the practice of counsellor trainers. I address a number of potential audiences here: practitioners, researchers and professional bodies. I argue for stronger involvement on the part of professional bodies. I look at how the research community can contribute to strengthening counselling’s research profile and thus help improve the way that universities perceive the significance of counsellor training. I look at the importance of active involvement on the part of trainers in designing and engaging in developmental activities. I also argue for the importance of trainers adopting a contingent mode of participation in their educational communities of practice (Handley et al, 2006), i.e. working in ways congruent with their norms and values but also co-operatively, constructively and developmentally with their wider institutions. I would invite trainers in from the fringes. I am informed here not only by my professional experiences but my political inclinations. To quote Neil Kinnock (1985); ‘principle without power is idle sterility’. I believe in the importance of participation. Here are my recommendations or points for discussion arising from this research.

i. The need to develop local and/or regional trainer forums and support groups

In this thesis, the public nature of the role has led me to prioritise effective anonymisation of trainers and also to ensure their consent as to how they have been portrayed. This links with a perceived requirement of the role mentioned by trainers within the research – the need to measure and restrain disclosure. This may stem from its perceived importance to the effective holding and containing of groups or from a perceived need to maintain a ‘strong’ and ‘collected’ public
profile before colleagues. Whatever the basis, it is important that support initiatives are offered within safe non-judgmental environments.

One potential avenue is the development of a network of trainer support and development groups. I attended a number of annual Person Centred Trainer Conferences that were held in the 1990s. Known as PCTC1, PCTC2, etcetera, they provided important opportunities for trainers from a range of settings to meet together. These were initiatives emanating from and sustained by person-centred trainers themselves. These came to an end but their model could serve as a blueprint for other such initiatives, as could the local organisations of counsellors who meet under the British Association for the Person Centred Approach (BAPCA) umbrella.

Such grass-root initiatives, however, may continue the divisive effects of schoolism. One of the disadvantages of being identified with an integrative approach is the lack of sense of membership and belonging that being part of a school can bring. As Jane said, ‘the person-centred community feels like my kinship, my family’. I have experienced a sense of loss as I have moved away from my primary person-centred identification. Professional organisations could usefully take the initiative in helping trainers build effective wider cross-school support networks.

ii. The development of C.P.D. provision

Following on from the point above, I would argue for the importance generally of developing C.P.D. provision for trainers. There is lack of opportunity to reflect on practice, to make sense of what we do, to explore alternatives in the day-to-day undertaking of the role. I am informed here in part by my undertaking of this research. The introduction to differing ways of understanding the role has been exciting and invigorating. I am also informed by the responses of the trainers to the interviewing process, of their reporting on the value of the opportunity to reflect on their practice.
It is not easy to access differing ideas concerning the nature of professional education. C.P.D. activity could include exploration of competing paradigms, an opening up and examining of understanding and practice. Again, I would argue that professional organisations are well-placed to take a lead in any such provision. An important precedent is B.A.C.P.’s support for training for trainers in research methods. This is not an area mentioned by trainers but one that I would anticipate may emerge as a growing source of pressure. BACP course accreditation criteria (2009) now require staff to help students develop ‘critical awareness of research findings and methods’ (B3.7) alongside ‘awareness and working knowledge of research methodology’ (B3.8). I would argue that masters level study did not prepare me to undertake such a function and it has only been prolonged immersion at PhD level that makes me feel suitably qualified to do so. I can only see such pressures mounting as the significance of research rises.

An important area for attention is discovering what trainers would identify as their needs. In a study of a small group C.P.D. project amongst doctors (Richards, Troop and Graham, 2003), the active involvement of the doctors themselves in identifying the knowledge gaps and delivering the provision was regarded as crucial to its success. The importance of such ‘needs identification’ was echoed in the report of the 2010-11 Institute for Learning (IfL) annual C.P.D. survey (Nash, 2012). It would seem important to me that research amongst trainers should be the starting-point for any programme of any preparatory training, C.P.D. and support provision.

iii. The desirability of revisiting B.A.C.P. trainer accreditation

These studies demonstrated the level of responsibility carried by trainers and the variety of demands to which they are required to respond. An argument could be posed for a revisiting of the B.A.C.P. trainer accreditation scheme in order to promote effective preparation for the role and support within it.

Trainers are a neglected area within B.A.C.P. policy and procedures. As mentioned in the introduction, the B.A.C.P. trainer accreditation scheme for trainers was closed in 2002 and use of the title withdrawn in 2010. The latest
course accreditation criteria (B.A.C.P., 2009) talk in general and loose terms of the staff team needing to be ‘appropriately qualified’ and having ‘access to’ appropriate support and consultation, of ‘the majority’ of staff holding current accreditation and being in practice, and of staff ‘between them’ demonstrating sufficient competence to cover all areas. What this may mean is that a certain minimum level of counselling experience is present in the team but where is the requirement for effective preparation for the role and mentoring within it? Where are laid-down criteria for the nature and amount of support and supervision? I would add my support to any initiative by B.A.C.P. to revisit and reprise the defunct trainer accreditation scheme. COSCA provides one potential model. Accredited status requires diploma level counsellor qualifications, a specified level of counselling experience (accredited counsellor status from 2015), training experience, and the on-going level of required supervision and continuing professional development (C.P.D.). Applicants are also required to hold approved training qualifications (COSCA, 2011). I would argue that initial training schemes and C.P.D. activities for trainers will not prosper without such requirements. I would point to wider experience within the educational sector. An attempt to raise teaching standards resulted in the requirement for a prescribed annual amount of C.P.D. in order to maintain qualified teacher status in state-funded adult and community education from 2007-2012 (IfL, 2012).

Such a move may add to the sense of stress and pressure reported by trainers here but may also add to the sense of feeling supported and renewed and part of a wider training community. I would point to Jack’s report of the benefits from the recent introduction of the BABCP trainer accreditation scheme:

What’s interesting is the portfolio was looked at by people from various other institutions and it’s very much a grandparenting thing they’re allowing you to do, you know, it’s that sort of thing, but it encouraged me, therefore, to go to specific events, teaching events, about the training of ...writing training programmes for psychotherapists which, of course, two or three years ago I just never would have bothered with. [101-108]
iv. The development of the research base

The voices of rank-and-file trainers have been significantly under-represented in the literature, a crucial omission given the centrality of their role to the sector’s continuation. I am aware of substantial potential areas of inquiry opened up by this research project and would encourage further research in the area. As such a wide-ranging exploration, it touched on many areas, all of which would benefit from further inquiry. For example, one area is the impact of age and gender on the experience of the role and the whole sense of a trainer lifespan. Other areas include how trainers see themselves in relation to the professionalisation project, the shifting educational cultures and wider economic and political climate. Without underplaying the difficulties, I would add the importance of trainers themselves engaging in research in the field.

Yardley (2000) talks of one measure of quality as the impact and importance of the research findings. On a personal as well as a wider note, this brings a responsibility to find differing ways of disseminating research findings. Given the widely recognised research-practice gap, I think it important that I find diverse ways of disseminating these findings. This might involve me in writing for professional journals such as ‘Therapy Today’ and involving myself in contributing to CPD provision, participating in trainer forums and addressing support groups. The latter activities might be of added significance given the evidence that passive dissemination approaches seem largely ineffective in developing practice (Wheller and Morris, 2010).

On a related note, I would argue that the raising of the research profile of counselling generally is important to strengthening the presence of training within the higher education sector. While important initiatives have been launched to improve our quantitative evidence base, for example, in primary care (Rowland et al, 2000) and schools (Cooper, 2009), I am persuaded by McLeod’s (2011) argument that qualitative researchers need to work together to enhance the profile of qualitative research. Qualitative research tends towards what Becher and Trowler’s (2001) call a rural research pattern, characterised by dispersion, with individual researchers or small groups pursuing a range of disparate research
interests. McLeod (ibid) talks of the importance of building cumulative knowledge, which accords with Flyvbjerg’s (2001, 2006) notion of the importance of the accumulation of case knowledge to the development of professional expertise. Research in the field, for instance that undertaken by counselling students, could make important contributions in this area and I would emphasise the importance of trainers supporting their publication. I would also stress the importance of building groups that could work co-operatively together on areas of inquiry. On a final note, McLeod (2011) underlines the significance of producing systematic reviews, meta- analyses of qualitative research findings, a potentially highly productive activity that could be undertaken by the more experienced, confident researchers in the counselling arena.

v. A contingent mode of participation

As this study exemplified, trainers adopt a range of positions vis-à-vis their institutional setting. I respect the variety of positions and think that there is room for all such positioning. We are a ‘broad church’ and a variety of positioning allows the nursing of counter-cultural values that for some practitioners are at the heart of the counselling endeavour. However, I equally think it important that teams as a whole adopt a contingent mode of participation within the institution. This is especially important for trainers in leadership or managerial positions. Understanding and co-operating with institutional processes and procedures, assuming roles on committees or within schools and faculties – such activities are important to embedding ourselves within institutional frameworks and cultures. Adopting such a position also allows the views from the margins to be represented, for counsellors to contribute to and influence the wider discourse. For instance, my sense of the inequalities within the higher educational system led me to assume the role of equality and diversity champion within the faculty of humanities for some time here at the university. It is possible to question and contribute. Not adopting such a position not only restricts the potential to influence but also leaves counselling departments vulnerable to closure - as I have found to my cost.
Taking such a position also would embrace the importance of joining forces with other subject areas and potentially crossing divides. My eyes have been opened by contributing, for instance, to the doctorate in educational psychology programme at my university. I have formed relationships with colleagues from other sectors which have led me to recognise the common nature of many of our challenges. Moreover, counselling training has become an integral part of the educational psychology programme. Such initiatives would contribute not only towards the firming of counsellor training’s foundations within institutions but also to the development of wider supportive, developmental networks.

vi. The reopening of debate about training

On a final note, these studies did not demonstrate unqualified support amongst trainers for the proposed state regulatory system. Mixed feelings were evident, even amongst university-based trainers, characterised in some quarters as the standard-bearers of such a project. While not downplaying the potential repercussions of the failure to gain state recognition and protection of title, one potentially positive repercussion is the opportunity to reopen debate about the future direction of counselling training.

The literature demonstrates a number of competing models that could form the basis for a counsellor training programme. Perhaps a way forward is the encouragement of critical thinking in its broadest sense about the nature of training. CBT trainers allied themselves specifically with the notion of education rather in the way that university lecturers in nursing identify themselves as ‘nurse educators’. One can view this as a political manoeuvre in a professionalisation drive. It can also be viewed as reflecting a scientist-practitioner approach. However, one can also view it as signifying a valuing of critical thinking. Feltham (2010) makes an impassioned plea for the importance of critical thinking, for the on-going questioning of counselling practice. This can be extended to training.

Trainers in this study overwhelmingly talked of their practice as modelled on how they themselves were trained and by their ‘on-the-job’ learning. This is largely how I learnt. While learning theories emphasise the importance of situated
learning, of learning by participating in a community of practice (e.g. Lave and Wenger, 1991), there are some inherent dangers. We may tend towards reproduction of existing practice rather than innovation. Mary talked of her disquiet at one result of her wish to pass on the ethos: *But what it does do is it makes the team almost incestuous and that’s one problem I’ve not solved* [338-339]. This can have significant repercussions in a world of rapidly shifting economic, social, cultural and political contexts. An opening up of debate and dialogue in the field can only serve to enhance our potential responsiveness.

**7.4 CONCLUDING AND ENDING**

I realise that I have ended this thesis with an argument that we need to move forward. This feels apposite. The challenge for counselling and training is to move forward in a time of continuing challenge and questioning. I may sound at points pessimistic and certainly this is one of my responses to the prevailing situation. However, as I said in the introduction, my involvement with counselling is a continued existential vote for kindness in human affairs, a vote which I continue. This means that I need to play my part, along with others. One contribution is to ensure that this research is productively used.

I come to the end of this extended piece of research and writing with as much of an eye to the future as the past. I am aware of the desire to start again, to rewrite, to continue to polish, to ‘smooth the narrative’. I am also aware of having in these final pages set myself challenges for the future. I recognise myself caught between the fifth and sixth stages of Rowan’s (1981) research process, recognising how my project involves both activities. It is with his words I finish:

‘…after I have been immersed in this for some time, I begin to get dissatisfied. Analysis is not enough. I must start telling people what it means and how I have understood what we have been through …… At a certain point, however, I do not want to turn into a communicator. I want to get back to some real work. Now that I have learnt what I have learnt, I can go back to my field and continue to practice, only now at a higher level’ (p.100).
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Appendix 1: Working with a transcript

An illustration of some of the stages: Peggy

Stage 2: Making initial notes: free coding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>[repetition of power]</th>
<th>Holding the tension of power. Power central. Trusting students and group process. Deciding when /whether/how to intervene. Responsibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[emphasising demandingness]</td>
<td>No of levels at which required to operate at optimum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal drive – how much is it about me?</td>
<td>Yeah. But then that’s also probably my personal psychopathology for me to do that. I suppose what I’m recognising is because you’re operating at an emotional level, inevitably, given the nature of what we’re actually doing, we’re not training secretaries, and that’s not to be disparaging about secretaries, but it’s such a very particular task that you are setting out to do in counselling training which demands of you an emotional and an intellectual level in a way that’s quite challenging it its self, to be able to work from head/heart simultaneously with a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[we not I]</td>
<td>A particular task Need to work intellectually and emotionally simultaneously with a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[you not I]</td>
<td>Need to work with powerful interpersonal processes in group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Again, holding that tension of power. Power, power, it’s so much about power, where the power lies. Attempting to hold a level of trust in the process and trust in the capacity of students, trainees to work with stuff, to do stuff themselves and at what point, actually, as a trainer or a tutor you have to step in and take responsibility for what’s going on.</td>
<td>God, it’s just incredibly demanding, all of the different levels at which you’re required to operate at optimum level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L. And there is something about -it sounds like -inherent as a challenge is what you say - it’s not just operating at a minimum it’s trying to operate at an optimal- be your best.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Stage 3. Identifying initial themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Triggers</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>[repetition of power]</strong></td>
<td>Holding the tension of power. Power central. Trusting students and group process. Deciding when /whether/how to intervene. Responsibility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>[emphasising demandingness]</strong></td>
<td>No of levels at which required to operate at optimum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>[we not I]</strong></td>
<td>A particular task. Need to work intellectually and emotionally simultaneously with a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>[you not I]</strong></td>
<td>Need to work with powerful interpersonal processes in group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Again, holding that tension of power. Power, power, it’s so much about power, where the power lies.</td>
<td>Attempting to hold a level of trust in the process and trust in the capacity of students, trainees to work with stuff, to do stuff themselves and at what point, actually, as a trainer or a tutor you have to step in and take responsibility for what’s going on.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>God, it’s just incredibly demanding. All of the different levels at which you’re required to operate at optimum level.</td>
<td>L. And there is something about it sounds like inherent as a challenge is what you say. It’s not just operating at a minimum it’s trying to operate at an optimal; be your best.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal drive – how much is it about me?</td>
<td>Yeah. But then that’s also probably my personal psychopathology for me to do that.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I suppose what I’m recognising is because you’re operating at an emotional level, inevitably, given the nature of what we’re actually doing, we’re not training secretaries, and that’s not to be disparaging about secretaries, but it’s such a very particular task that you are setting out to do in counselling training which demands of you an emotional and an intellectual level in a way that’s quite challenging it its self, to be able to work from head/heart simultaneously with a group of people. But then you are also working with the interpersonal stuff going on within the group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managing power responsibly and developmentally</td>
<td>Needing to work on number of levels at optimum.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needing to work intellectually and emotionally</td>
<td>Working with powerful interpersonal material.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Stage 5. Constructing superordinate themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Page/line</th>
<th>Key words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Using self as the resource</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laying oneself to one side</td>
<td>512-3</td>
<td>Because it was all about myself being present in the service of the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using self in the service of others</td>
<td>470-2</td>
<td>I think I became quite passive in my intent, my desire to be there for the other in the purpose of, in the service of the other.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tension around level of self-disclosure</td>
<td>231-2</td>
<td>that whole level of tension about just how much of yourself you bring in the room</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Living with a sense of personal vulnerability</td>
<td>241-2</td>
<td>So I think you make yourself potentially very, very vulnerable as a trainer, as a person-centred trainer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A way of being</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>It is about who you are as a person.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX 2: Informed consent form

PARTICIPANT CONSENT

Research into the experience and understanding of counsellor trainers.
Being undertaken by Liz Ballinger, University of Manchester.
Tel: 0161 2753516 or Liz.ballinger@manchester.ac.uk

I agree to participate in an interview focusing on my experience of being a trainer. This interview is contributing to an ongoing research process into trainers’ perceptions of the training role. This research is also contributing to the completion of a Ph.D. on this topic with particular reference to the challenges perceived as inherent to the role and how the role may have changed in the wider context of professionalisation and proposed regulation.

I understand that the meeting will be recorded. A written transcript will be produced and this will then be analysed. Recordings will be destroyed following transcription and analysis in order to protect the anonymity of participants. Written transcripts that are retained will not include names of participants or any material that might personally identify participants.

Any findings may be used in publications and in papers presented at conferences. The identity of participants will be limited to their wider work setting (university, further education, independent), length and nature of experience as trainers, theoretical orientation, gender and ethnic identity. Care will be taken to ensure that this cannot lead to identification of an individual participant. Any allusions to students or clientwork will be presented in a general manner that maintains confidentiality and anonymity.

I understand that I can remove my consent to participate at any point and records of my participation will be removed.

I am aware that Liz’s supervisor is Dr. William West and that if I have any concerns I can contact him to discuss them. Tel: 0161 2753397 or william.west@manchester.ac.uk

Research Participant
(Name and signature)

Date:
APPENDIX 3: Interview schedule

Interview Questions

Am interested in the experience of counselling trainers working in differing settings, on how they understand the role, what they view as the satisfactions of being involved in training, on the challenges they see as part of the role, of the costs of the role to them personally as well as the pluses. Am also interested in whether you see the theoretical orientation and settings as bringing particular pluses and/or challenges. Last but not least, am interested in finding out whether trainers think that there are new opportunities or challenges being thrown up by the shifting climate for counselling.

- Could you tell me about your history as a trainer, where you’ve trained, roles you’ve taken, role you have now.
- How would you describe your gender and ethnic identity?
- How would you describe the role of the trainer?
- How did you learn to be a trainer and what has informed the development of your training practice?
- Have you any sense of the theoretical orientation of the training you’ve been involved in posing particular challenges for you as a trainer?
- Do you think that the institutional setting impacts on your experiences as a trainer? How?
- Any sense of your age, gender, ethnic identity etc. impacting on your experience of the role?
- Any sense of any change in your experience of the role in recent times?
- Tell me about the costs to you as a person of being a trainer.
- Tell me about your satisfactions, about what feeds/fed you in the role, sustains/sustained you, keeps / kept you in.
- Do you see your future as a trainer? If so, what do you see?
- Is there anything else you would add?